

DOCTORAL THESIS

Teaching Cultural Heritage through Craft in Kuwaiti Primary Schools for Girls

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Teaching Cultural Heritage through Craft in Kuwaiti Primary Schools for Girls

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of PhD

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ABSTRACT

Students in Kuwait are not taught art history in schools and know very little about their cultural heritage. This study developed a formal curriculum unit which introduced a traditional women's craft into the art curriculum for girls in Kuwait. The aim was to use art history to increase their understanding of their cultural heritage and of their female identities and roles in society.

The action research methodology involved collaboration with three local primary art teachers, a professional weaver and a Kuwaiti education expert. The actions, in order, were: researching art education theory, policy and practice; researching and developing curriculum content (*Alsadu* artefacts); designing an experimental curriculum unit and teaching materials; implementing the unit in a school and evaluating it formatively; then refining the curriculum materials and revising and modifying aspects of the model. The curriculum was then implemented again and summatively evaluated before the research questions were answered.

Key findings were as follows: first, art history as such cannot be introduced into art education in Kuwait yet, because there is no expertise in this field and it is not an established discipline; second the Year Five Art curriculum can, however, accommodate the Western theory and practice of art heritage and cultural education by focusing on Bedouin culture and including a traditional women's craft; third, because Kuwait society deals with gender issues differently, Western theories about women and crafts have to be modified before they can be transferred. Thus, the research ended by recommending educational policy makers to promote cultural learning instead of art history, through

school trips to museums in particular. Because the action research methodology worked so well in this curriculum experiment, educational policy makers are recommended to apply it more widely in schools.

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I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my husband and children, who supported me during my study. I am indebted to them for their patience and commitment to family while I was pursuing this postgraduate dream. All my love goes to them.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my father, who died during my studies in Britain and had gone before I could bid him a final farewell. How I would have liked to dedicate this thesis to him in person when he was alive, and see his customary big smile.

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INTRODUCTION

This research investigated ways of developing and improving the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwaiti primary schools. The main aim of the study was to consider ways of introducing historical and cultural content into Kuwait's National Curriculum for Art at this educational level.

This research functioned in part by adding new content and methods. The official curriculum did not include art history and this research was a first attempt to consider ways of introducing it.

This chapter presents the broad problem area for the research and its context. It describes society in Kuwait, the place of art in society and the state of art education. The specific focus was on the problem of introducing art history into the art curriculum. The chapter specifies the research questions and outlines the significance of the study. Finally the chapter sets out the organisation of the thesis.

0.1. Broad problem area

The following section summarises the development of education in Kuwait. The information comes from the Ministry of Education and a UNESCO document.

Traditionally, Kuwaiti children received education in small rooms commonly attached to mosques, known as 'Al Kuttab'. Here, they learned to recite the Holy Qur'an and gained basic skills in writing and reading. Formal education in Kuwait began in 1912 when the first public school was founded (Kuwait, Ministry of Education, 1974). But it was not

until 1936, with the establishment of the Department of Education, that a formal system of education began to develop in earnest (UNESCO.1967. p. 772).

Kuwait was able to successfully modernise and improve its education and develop it as part of the political and socio-economic expansion of the nation during the 1950s. Until the mid-1960s, the expansion made great progress. During this period, the Kuwait government made elementary education mandatory and the Kuwaiti Constitution, which was created in 1961, outlined a new policy where by all children, irrespective of sex, had the right to education at an elementary level; moreover, this education was be provided free of charge at the government's expense (Kuwaiti Constitution, 1961, Article 40, Section 3). Importantly, the Constitution states: 'education is a right for Kuwaitis guaranteed by the state...And education is obligatory, free of charge according to the law' (Ministry of Education, 1996, p.5).

0.1.1. Society in Kuwait

Until the 18th century, Kuwait was simply a small country located in the Arabian Gulf. Its two traditional social and cultural patterns related either to the towns or the desert where the Bedouin lived. The nation state of Kuwait was established as a result of migrations in the 17th and 18th centuries towards the Arabian Gulf coast by tribes in search of improved grazing and water. The Gulf shared in the traditional division of the topography of coastal areas in Saudi Arabia, which has always assumed a more important role than the desert in the economy of the peninsula (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985).The traditional system of social organisation was greatly influenced by a synthesis of the sea and the desert. People living along the coast relied on pearl fishing and trade, which formed the basis of modern urban society, while the nomadic Bedouin in the desert relied on grazing sheep. These different groups in Kuwait gradually achieved social solidarity and cohesion through a

strong system of shared religious feelings and values. This manifested itself in a cultural belief in collaborative work, maintained through ties of kinship, strong alliances and marriage. According to the Royal Scottish Museum (1985), the Bedouin mainly lived in the desert areas. Every spring, many urban Kuwaitis today who are of Bedouin origin still camp in the desert with their families. The day-to-day economic activities for the two communities in society used to depend on each other. The towns relied on the Bedouin for meat and dairy products, while the Bedouin visited the towns for other food products and any equipment that they could not produce for themselves.

The tribal structure of the population of Kuwait and the heritage of the desert played an important role in the nation's developing social structure. After the discovery of petroleum in 1938, however, large numbers of foreigners came to Kuwait, which experienced astonishingly swift economic growth. When the native workforce was no longer sufficient, the country invited in experts and other educated workers from neighbouring states and elsewhere, who were urgently needed for its development (Hussein, 1994).

The table below shows the numbers of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis every ten years from 1965 to 2005.

Population by Nationality in Selected Census Years				
Year	Kuwaiti	Non-Kuwaiti	Total	% of K
1965	168,793	298,546	467,339	36.1
1975	307,755	687,082	994,837	30.9
1985	470,473	1,226,828	1,697,301	27.7
1995	653,616	921,954	1,575,570	41.5
2005	860,324	1,333,327	2,193,651	39.2

Table 1: Numbers of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, from 1975 to 2005. From Kuwait Annual Statistical Abstract, 2005.

The table above shows that the waves of migration were so great that non-Kuwaitis began to exceed Kuwaitis in number. The migrants came mainly from parts of Asia and Africa. In effect, Kuwait became a multi cultural land, where people from many nationalities brought together a variety of cultural values to form what is known today as Kuwaiti society. But it is worth noting that this multi-cultural blend does not affect education in Kuwaiti government schools, because only Kuwaitis can attend them. Private schools have been set up for the children of foreign residents (UNESCO, International Bureau of Education, 2006/07).

0.1.2. Art in Kuwait

Kuwait has a wealth of ethnic arts, most of which are popular traditional crafts. Such arts mainly use locally gathered materials and many of the products are still used in daily life. Crafts of this sort are not only considered useful on a day-to-day basis, but are also considered beautiful by the relatively few people who practise or are interested in them. Examples of such crafts include jewellery, tin-smithing, carpet-weaving, woodwork and embroidery (Kamal, 1983).

Weaving is one of the most important Kuwaiti crafts; it has been practised in the region for centuries. The detailed, complex and elaborate products, in particular, cushions or rugs with triangular, vertical and horizontal designs, are used to furnish tents (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985, p.112). Another textile craft which is popular and has a long history is embroidery, used mainly to decorate women's clothing and accessories.

Commonly, embroiderers create floral or geometric designs and feature sequins, appliqué and beading (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985, p.134). Nature is a significant source of

inspiration for the embroidery designs, which frequently take the form of stars and shells, as well as plants.

Another ancient craft is ship-building, which was considered one of the most fundamental of Kuwaiti crafts at a time when the country's economy owed much to the sea.

Interestingly, the ship-builders had very diverse skills and were required not only to build ocean vessels but also replicas of old or damaged boats (Al-Kunay, and Al-Ksoosy, 1982). Indeed, they were so skilled that they were able to use their carpentry skills to decorate chests and boxes.

The present research investigated a traditional form of weaving in Kuwait known as *Alsadu*. This is neglected in contemporary art education, as is the case with all traditional crafts.

0.1.3. Art Education in Kuwait

Formal art education began in Kuwait in 1912, when it was part of the syllabus of the Arabic Language curriculum at Almubarakia School. This development of this syllabus was the first step in Kuwaiti cultural history towards recognising art in formal education. The art curriculum in Kuwaiti schools, as established during the 1950s, was designed for students from Years One to Four only.

In the early 1950s, art education in its simplest basic forms, namely drawing and modelling, became part of the school curriculum. Hence, art teaching programs laid the first brick in the establishment of a Contemporary Art movement in Kuwait (Ministry of Information 1992, p. 36).

At the time that the present research was carried out, art instruction in schools did not provide students with exposure to living artists or to local arts and crafts, and did not include art history or explore the relationship between art and culture.

0.2. Problem statement

In 2005, the structure of the Kuwaiti education system changed and a fifth year was added to primary education for children aged 10-11. This change in the education system came as a surprise and led to the unexpected development of a new curriculum in art education for Year Five students. But this addition was made hastily and the aims were not fully articulated.

At the time the research began, many problems affected this art curriculum. Significantly for the present research, it:

- was concerned with developing practical skills only and did not require any knowledge of art or concept learning.
- did not include art history.
- promoted only limited methods of teaching/learning, based on teacher-centred instruction and limited resources.

I had been an art teacher for 10 years and was motivated to address some of the above problems when I was awarded a scholarship to undertake this PhD research in the UK.

One of my main concerns was that the art curriculum for Year Five was limited to developing students' technical skills only. It did not engage students in talking about and responding to artworks or include any art history. I believed that art programmes should

be created and implemented in such a way that all children benefited in terms of their general education. Essentially, as Clark, Day and Greer (1987) contend, I understood that art is a subject which requires not only skills, but also a background knowledge of key concepts, which needs to be structured and implemented within both a general education and an art education framework. Hence, it is helpful if the aims and content of art education are based on and linked to core educational goals.

The Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait aimed to develop children's artistic imagination, but only to a limited degree. According to Callaway and Kear (2005), the values, aims and outcomes promoted in the Art and Design National Curriculum in the UK at this time were achieved through Attainment Targets which specified three learning domains: knowledge, skills and understanding (p.3). At the time the present research began, the Kuwaiti art curriculum ignored two of these three learning domains. As far as knowledge and understanding were concerned, students were taught only three basic art concepts: line, colour and texture. The official teachers' guide (Al-Farsyet *al.*, 1987) did not mention art criticism, art history or aesthetics and, consequently, students in class seldom discussed their own work or that of anyone else.

0.2.1. Teaching Art History

Scholars in art and education in many Western countries, however, understand art history as fundamental to all students' education. One argument is that it is essential because it enables students to grasp and understand the first acts of creativity carried out by the human race and teaches them how people are able to express themselves through the arts, above all in ways that are abstract and not possible in other cultural subjects, such as literature or music (Kleinbauer, 1987). Another argument is that art history educates students in terms of mistaken perceptions and stereotypes and also actively teaches them

how to use visual resources to their greatest extent and how to adapt and create them, not only in art but also in life. Most importantly, including art history as a learning domain in art education is believed to build students' ability both to create and appreciate art (Al Hurwitz and Day, 2007)

The intent of art history, especially as we approach it in art education, is to provide information and insights that will enlighten our understanding and appreciation of artworks and their significance and meaning. (p.226)

In the light of international developments in the specialist field, there was another stark failure in the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait, namely, its neglect of the cultural domain of art education, in which pupils learn about their own and other cultures. As Mason (1988) states, art should be taught in a way which actively encompasses the presence of art in the world outside school and the cultural differences present within societies (p.64). Kuwait, like any other nation, has a unique culture, which is reflected in the traditions, styles and customs associated with indigenous arts and crafts; these should all be introduced into schools so as to ensure that students are aware of their own cultural and artistic heritage.

Consequently, this research set out to develop and include art historical and cultural content from Kuwait in the art curriculum for Year Five. The focus was on investigating what kinds of historical content, teaching/learning methods and resources could be developed and introduced, and in developing and testing out methods of instruction which had not so far been used in Kuwaiti primary education. It focused in particular on investigating the use of museums, sketchbooks and the questioning/enquiry method of studying indigenous artworks.

0.3. Research Question

The research questions devised at the start were as follows:

1. How can the theory and practice of art history and cultural education be introduced into the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait?
2. How can a traditional women's craft be taught in a way that demonstrates its relevance to students' lives today?
3. What kinds of teaching and learning strategies and resources will enable me to achieve my overall aim?
4. What kind of research method is appropriate for a study that focuses on curriculum change?

0.4. Significance of the study

Although the aim of this study was to improve and contribute to the art curriculum for Year Five in Kuwait's primary schools, I was conscious that there had been (i) no research into art history in art education in Kuwait, (ii) the country did not provide for historical and cultural learning, and (iii) the Year Five curriculum had not been analysed, modified or improved since it was established.

This was the first piece of educational research in Kuwait that set out to introduce historical and cultural learning for the national curriculum in art. In the curriculum unit that was developed special consideration was given to learning the techniques of traditional *Alsadu* weaving and acquiring knowledge about it as an art form.

0.5. Organisation of the thesis

Chapter One reports on the first part of the literature review, which examines recent developments in and theories of art history culture and heritage together with possible rationales for teaching them in art lessons. The aim was to develop a theoretical framework for a new art curriculum that embraced the cultural heritage and explored the role of art in cultural learning. This chapter reports on the current state of knowledge in Western literature about art history and the cultural heritage and considers this in relation to cultural and educational policy and practice in Kuwait.

Chapter Two reports on the second part of the literature review, which examines Western models of art curricula and assesses their capacity. The aim was to use this information to design a curriculum unit for primary schools in Kuwait. This chapter discusses possible aims and objectives for art history teaching, examines the choice of artefacts as curriculum content and analyses four main teaching/learning strategies which have potential for introducing the content. Finally the chapter presents a new curriculum model for teaching art history in Kuwait.

Chapter Three explains the research methodology. It reports on why the action research method was chosen and the plan of action. The first section presents the research questions and shows how they were refined following the literature review; then the methodology of action research and the way in which it influenced the research design are discussed. Next, the methods of data collection and analysis are discussed. Finally, the ethical considerations for this study are presented.

Chapter Four focuses on the development of curriculum materials. First of all, it explains how I arrived at a working definition of a *curriculum* that focused on art history and cultural understanding. Next, it reports the findings of research that I carried out into the curriculum content (*Alsadu* weaving). It goes on to describe how the curriculum materials that were produced to help art teachers implement the unit were designed, focusing in particular on the aims and objectives, teacher guidelines and teaching/learning strategies.

Chapter Five describes the action the first time the curriculum was implemented in a Kuwaiti primary school. The aim was to implement and evaluate the curriculum unit with a view to revising, modifying and improving the materials. Each lesson is described, together with the students' responses and the teacher's evaluations, and then the data collected from the pre and post questionnaires are analysed. Finally, I present the findings from the evaluations together with some recommendations for changes to the lesson plans and questionnaire.

Chapter Six describes the second implementation of the curriculum unit in two more schools. The chapter begins by reporting on two professional development workshops organised for the teachers before they began to teach the unit. It goes on to describe what happened in each lesson in both schools in turn, together with the students' responses. Then it reports on the teachers' and my own evaluations of the lessons and materials. Next there is a short analysis and comparison of the pre-test and post-test questionnaire data. Finally it presents the recommendations which the team agreed were needed for finalising the curriculum design.

Chapter Seven reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum model and unit. Before this chapter was written, I analysed the results of the empirical research again and tried to connect the findings with theories outlined during the literature review. The four main themes selected for further reflection and discussion were: (i) approaches to teaching cultural heritage through art; (ii) the design and content of curriculum unit; (iii) the role of museum visits; and (iv) the action research method. These themes are identified and discussed in order to help me answer the research questions and come to some final conclusions about ways to continue developing the new curricular framework.

Chapter Eight synthesises the findings of the research as a whole. This chapter tries to answer the research questions finalised at the end of the literature review and discusses the contribution of this study to theory and practice in art education. It reflects on the methodology and also explores the implications of the findings of the study for future research, art education policy and practice in Kuwait and my own teaching.

CHAPTER ONE: ART HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter reports on and discusses a review of some different kinds of literature relevant to the research topic. It was carried out in order to develop a conceptual framework for the research and to help me analyse and refine the research problem. According to Allison (1997), the aim of art educational research is to build such relationships as a researcher determines necessary between theory and practice, in order to know more about the research problem and to formulate theory to analyse the data. It was important for me to review relevant international literature in some depth so as to become more precise about the focus of my own research. Before I could design a new curriculum unit for Kuwait, I had to ascertain the current state of knowledge in Western literature about art history and cultural heritage and consider how this related to cultural and educational policy and practice in Kuwait. I also had to increase my awareness of international trends in art education, and new methods and content for teaching art history and culture. Later on, it was necessary to read literature on curriculum development and design; works under this heading are reviewed in Chapter Two.

In section one, I discuss theories and definitions of art history and recent developments. In section two, in order to find a significant rationale for this research, I consider three possible rationales for schools to teach it in depth: learning about humanity, learning about art history and learning about culture. In the last section, I explore some ideas about: (i) heritage and culture, (ii) definitions and types of heritage. (iii) aims for teaching cultural heritage and potential contribution to art and cultural learning and reflect on the lack of research into cultural heritage in Kuwait. In the next chapter, where I report on the

second part of the literature review, I discuss some methods of teaching art history and culture.

1. 1 Art History and reasons for teaching it

1.1.1 Definitions of Art History

In the review of the literature about art history, a working definition was sought which could serve this area of educational research. Theories by such scholars as Kleinbauer (1971-1987), Greer (1987), Smith (1987), Collins (1988), Freedman (1991), Fitzpatrick (1992), Pointon (1997), Arnold (2004), Mason (1990) and Addiss and Erickson (1993), among others, were of great value in putting my research questions into context. I considered definitions and interpretations by both Western and Middle Eastern scholars. In this part of the chapter I discuss the views of some of them on the nature and significance of art history and the reasons that they give for teaching it in schools.

Considering the different definitions I came across gave me a general background to the academic discipline and helped me to understand its content and meaning. I concluded that it was imperative for art teachers from Kuwait, including me, to improve their understanding of it as a specialist subject so as to develop their own curriculum aims and working definitions for teaching it in schools. One of the most comprehensive and influential writers that I came across was Kleinbauer (1971), who defines art history as:

....the branch of knowledge or learning that involves the investigation and interpretation of works of art. Its primary data are specifically the visual arts: architecture, sculpture, painting, printmaking, photography, and such craft arts as ceramics, weaving, jewellery, metal-smithing, coins, and furniture (quoted in Smith, 1987, pp.155-156).

Smith (1987), endorses the above view, and finds Kleinbauer's emphasis on investigation methodologically interesting. He notes that art historians "aspire to describe, analyze and interpret individual artworks by identifying their *who, what, when, where* and *why* – in short, their place in the scheme of history" (p.156). Rayala's book *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Art Education* (1995) has a similar definition of art history, describing it as:

a record of art in which information is gathered, interpretations made and judgments rendered about art objects, artists and conceptual influences on works of art. Art history is the study of works of art as historical documents. Students are guided through analysis and interpretation of attribution (Who did it?), provenance (Where did it come from?), style (What does it look like?), symbols (What does it mean?) and function (What is it for?) (Rayala, 1995, p. 121).

I found Smith's views important because he says that art historians not only seek to discover: (i) what features of an artwork allow students to assess it in the light of its unique situation; but also (ii) the artist's identity and historical period. In addition, (iii), they seek to relate it in a historically meaningful way to other works by the same artist and others working on other subjects. Seabolt (2001), who understands art history in a similar way, characterises it as "a body of knowledge about and study of specific artworks and their relationship to other works and to the chronological period and cultural milieu in which they were created" (pp.44-49).

Smith and Seabolt both refer to art history as 'knowledge' brought to the study of the artworks, about their individual histories and relationships to other artworks. However, their views diverge because Smith believes that art historians should focus primarily on individual artists and seek to reveal their identity within an historical period; whereas Seabolt believes that they should focus mainly on the chronological period and cultural *milieu* in which an artwork was created.

My interest in Kleinbauer's ideas stemmed from the fact that he treats actual examples of artworks, including crafts, as primary data through which art historians come to understand the history of art. His ideas encouraged me to think of studying weaving, in the women's craft tradition of *Alsadu*, as primary art historical data and to consider ways of getting students to investigate it for themselves so as to contribute to their knowledge of art in Kuwait.

Weaving is arguably the most important Kuwaiti craft and was practised by the Bedu for centuries. This tradition is handed down from mother to daughter, with young girls learning to spin at the age of five or six (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985). Crichton (1989) states that in the past, most girls who wove *Alsadu* could execute the most complex designs by the age of sixteen. Since this craft is disappearing, I was keen to introduce school children in Kuwait to it as a visual art form, to discover where the tradition of *Alsadu* started and to study its cultural characteristics, styles and customs. I considered it important for children to study the meaning and value of different indigenous art forms so as to increase their awareness of their own culture and artistic heritage. I already knew that some Western experts considered *Alsadu* woven crafts made by women weavers as objects of artistry and beauty, as well as use. However, this weaving tradition had never been the focus of art historical study in Kuwait or included in the curriculum in Kuwaiti schools. During the early stages of the research, I learned that Dr Keireine Canavan, programme director of the textiles department at the University of Wales Institute, was researching Bedu *Alsadu* weaving patterns and their traditional symbolism at *Alsadu House Textile Museum* in Kuwait. This museum is managed by a group of people who are especially interested in this art form.

Many scholars who see art history as the study of historical artworks and artists, such as the French art historian, Hadjinicolaou (1978), point out that 'man is influenced by the

society in which he lives' (p. 31). They write from the position that each person's creativity 'expresses and somehow reflects the whole of society'. We can say that when we study works of art from the past we learn not only about the life of the artist but also about the historical period in which his/her work was produced. Thus, through studying a work of art, it is possible to identify and study the community and culture which produced it. This is consistent with Greer's claim (1987) that art historians investigate not only artworks but also the way in which they relate to the cultural and historical context in which they arise.

It is possible to argue that art in Kuwait is manifested most clearly in its local popular handicrafts. Carpet-makers, carpenters, jewellers, blacksmiths and tinsmiths today all make beautiful articles in their workshops. Most of these craft traditions date back to the period before the discovery of oil in the 1930s, which introduced modern urban life with all its complicated and mechanized aspects. According to Kamal, who is interested in folk arts and handicrafts in Kuwait, much can be learned about traditional Kuwaiti society and culture through a comprehensive view of its applied arts (Kamal, 1983). This fits in with Greer's view (1987) that the best way to study the culture of previous societies is to study their artworks. In 2010, the National Newspaper of Abu Dhabi (July 31) reported that Dr Keireine Canavan (see above), having recently completed a nine-month sabbatical in Kuwait, had commented that *Alsadu* "conveys the Bedouin's rich heritage and instinctive awareness of natural beauty, with patterns and designs messaging the nomadic lifestyle, the desert environment and the emphasis of symmetry and balance due to the making process" (p.4). Reviewing the international literature about art history convinced me that studying historical artworks was important in Kuwait, because it could help students to learn not only about artists as individuals and the particular characteristics of their artworks but also about society and culture. I

agreed with Smith's view (1987), expressed in the book *Discipline-Based Art Education*, that, in order to strengthen and improve practical forms of art instruction in schools, significant aspects of art history should be included in the curriculum for every grade from kindergarten through to grade 12 for the pedagogical benefit of all students.

As Collins (1988) points out, art history is a dimension of history in general, which is devoted to a particular kind of human activity, namely, the making of artworks, which she understands as material objects that have a *more-than-utilitarian* function. She reports that art history first appeared in Europe as a separate academic discipline in the nineteenth century, when it included the extra, or surplus purpose of certain constructs, generally referred to as "the aesthetic meaning" of such objects, including paintings, sculptures, buildings, and so on. I understand Collins and Smith as having a broader interpretation of art than Kleinbauer, since Smith clearly states that the job of an art historian is to investigate a wide range of objects, including paintings, buildings and sculpture, all of which can tell us a great deal about people's activities and lives. With regard to the history of visual arts practice in Kuwait, the Kuwaiti art educator Qatan (1983) states that, up to the 1950s, the so-called 'formative arts' or 'fine arts' did not exist there at all and that art education began only in the 1950s. Visual arts were practised before this, of course, but were not studied within formal education. Compared with Western countries such as Britain, therefore, the discipline of art, as well as art history, is in its infancy in Kuwait.

During this phase of the research I read an analysis by the art educator Freedman (1991) of the nature of art history as it affects art education in America; he notes that, to the contemporary mind, art historians appear to adopt at least two concepts of time. The first represents time as a multi-dimensional space in which different cultural and socioeconomic groups control the knowledge, production and values of art. The second

presents history only as a review of the past. I understood these two concepts of time as inter-connected. One view of art history was that, at a particular historical moment, the views of the cultural and socioeconomic groups that control the knowledge, art production and values of their era determine the kinds of artwork that art historians should study; and that this power structure and the notion of what is “good art” has varied over time. I questioned the idea expressed in much of the literature I read that the study of history relates only to the past. Things in the present (and the future) are affected by what went on in the past, including the study of art; they ought therefore to be connected.

The review of literature on art history revealed that much had been written about the question of whether ‘art’ includes everything that human beings have made or has a more exclusive meaning. Pointon’s handbook *History of Art* (1997) takes the line that art history concerns every ‘man-made’ structure and artefact, from furniture and ceramics to buildings and paintings, from photography and book illustrations to textiles and teapots; and that they all come within the jurisdiction of the art historian. But she notes that, in most educational institutions, art history refers only to the triad of painting, sculpture and architecture. I could not accept that formal art history should be restricted to this triad and agreed with Kleinbauer (1971) that it ought to include other kinds of visual arts, including for example, weaving, printmaking, jewellery and photography. In this view, the term ‘art’ can be extended to man-made objects with an aesthetic purpose, which is related to their functional intent, for example, the craft of weaving *Alsadu* which has a long history in the Middle East. In this tradition of art making, women used to weave all the essential items for their family’s needs, such as furnishings for tents, storage bags, animal trappings, outer tent panels and other objects required in everyday life. In fact, they made most of the items used in their people’s nomadic lifestyle and these served a

dual purpose, both aesthetic and functional. As Scarce (1985) has pointed out, they wove various designs and made decorated portable blankets, strips and banners of intricately woven pieces, all of which were colourful aesthetic objects, to enliven their desert surroundings as they moved from place to place.

1.1.2 Recent Developments in Art History

Arnold (2004) states that in recent years the term ‘art history’ itself has come into question and been keenly debated in various channels by writers and thinkers. Newer scholars understand it as a social and cultural discipline, as well as an historical one. But opinions are divided as to whether ‘new’ or ‘old’ art history is to be preferred, whether or not it should be included as a separate subject in formal education and whether it should include the study of images from the mass media. The new art historians contend that, as part of their education in the visual arts, students should have opportunities to understand and analyse the products of the mass media, such as books, television, movies and electronic information. Because these media exert a powerful influence on people’s lives, they think it is important for students to analyse how they shape and reflect society’s beliefs, thoughts and attitudes. I learned that some art historians in the UK who write about the ‘new art history’, such as Arnold (2004), are influenced by theoretical ways of thinking about art, which bring out its social and cultural as well as its historical meanings and that the terms ‘visual culture’ or ‘visual studies’ are replacing ‘art history’. These broader titles acknowledge the wider range of material now being included in historical analysis and make it easier to include digital media such as film, photography and video. The art educator Hickman (2005 a) equates art history in British schools with “Critical and Contextual Studies” and observes that it is sometimes related to a subject called ‘Media Studies’ (p.26).

In 1994 the National Committee for Standards in the Arts in the USA defined art history rather conservatively as “a record of the visual arts, incorporating information, interpretations and judgments about art objects, artists and conceptual influences on developments in the visual arts” (p. 28). For Duncum (2002), however, the starting point for studying visual culture in art education is “... not the prescribed, inclusive canon of the institutionalized art world, but students’ own cultural experience” (p.7).

As Arnold (2004) points out, the field of art history has changed over time and a wider range of material is now considered suitable for historical analysis. So-called visual culture enthusiasts argue that art educators need to find ways of developing learners’ skills by creating media products in their lessons and enabling them to recognise and analyse the role in everyday life of visual images as they shape and reflect society. They also need to learn how to use the new digital visual techniques to communicate their own ideas and information in art lessons. In *Films Deliver: Teaching Creatively With Film* (1970), for example, Culkin points out: “We live in a total-information culture, which is being increasingly dominated by the image. Intelligent living within such an environment calls for developing habits of perception, analysis, judgment and selectivity that are capable of processing the relentless input of visual data”. He writes that photography, film, video and the electronic media can become part of art education if we recognise them as legitimate components of learning strategies and they can, in addition, help us to learn and teach art history. After reading about this, I decided to encourage teachers in Kuwait to use new media and educational films in art history classes.

According to Greer (1987), there are two main approaches to studying artworks in art history: the historical and the contextual. The contextual one investigates works of art and artists in terms of their culture and other social and personal influences on their creation. I decided to adopt the contextual approach in this research and seek to understand Kuwaiti

culture and society through studying traditional weaving. I was persuaded by Greer (1987) that students should not merely study artworks in themselves but also the way in which they are related to their cultural and historical contexts.

The review of the literature on art history confirmed my initial idea that introducing art history into art education in Kuwaiti schools is important and that the traditional craft of weaving (*Alsadu*) would be an appropriate focus of study. I decided to use Greer's idea (1987) of using art history as a method for studying a culture. This seemed to be the most appropriate way to go about my research. His focus on the acquisition of knowledge, understood as factual information resulting from the first-hand investigation of artworks was consistent with my choice of woven objects as primary data for developing a unit of study on the history of art.

1.2. Reasons for Teaching Art History

The literature about teaching art history in schools revealed that it is controversial; in particular there is much debate about its relevance for younger students, of primary school age. However, there are many scholars who justify teaching it in schools.

Kleinbauer (1987), Fitzpatrick (1992), Feldman (1996), Chapman (1978, 1989), Collins (1988), Addiss and Erickson (1993), and Al Hurwitz and Day (2007), all affirm that art history should be offered at all stages of the art curriculum. The next section summarises the views of scholars concerning the importance of teaching the history of art and reasons for teaching it in schools.

I uncovered many reasons for teaching art history to school children. The ones I found most convincing are discussed in this section under three headings: (i) learning about

humanity; (ii) building knowledge about artworks in the past; and (iii) learning about culture.

1.2.1. Learning about humanity

Definitions of art history often refer to “the humanities”. According to Addiss and Erickson (1993), art history has two goals drawn from the humanities: namely that students should learn to (i) “recognize artworks as manifestations of values held in different cultures at different times” and (ii) that they should “value art as an important realm of human accomplishment that can inform us about how we have come to be who we are” (p. 118). Kleinbauer (1987) understands art history as essential for all students, because it enables them to grasp and understand the first acts of creativity carried out by the human race and subsequently teaches them how people have been able to express themselves through the arts.

Other scholars believe that studies of the arts should be included in a general history of ideas, so as to widen the meaning of the term. As long ago as 1920, Dvorak wrote,

Art does not only consist in solving problems of form and in the development of questions concerning form; it is also, always and above all, the expression of ideas which dominate humanity, its history as well as its religion, its philosophy or its poetry.

Thus, he sees that art is contained in the general history of ideas (quoted in Hadjinicolaou, 1978, p.49).

As noted previously, some scholars of art education argue that it should focus on relationships between children and visual forms, social values, and their environment.

Chapman (1978), for example, argues that students should learn to “read” their everyday

surroundings and points out that “the visual forms that pervade our lives serve the same stabilising functions that cultural artefacts have always served – to envision, to celebrate and to control the human condition” (p.102). Although she suggests that there is a direct relationship between reading visual forms and understanding social values, she recommends tolerance in making judgements about them and acknowledges that “whenever we judge the contemporary environment, we render judgment made on ourselves” (p. 115). For Chapman (1989), art serves basic human needs through the provision of “shelter, produce, clothing and objects of spiritual meaning” and in doing so expresses social customs and ideals.

Feldman (1996) also sees art teachers as supporting “humanistic goals” through the discipline of art history. His approach to teaching this subject is more ‘traditional’ than Chapman’s, since he claims that the “full achievement of these goals is impossible without knowledge of the principal art-historical traditions and their best” exemplars. In addition, he suggests that the study of art history enables students to build a foundation for “making informed judgments about art, both their own and the art of peoples and cultures beyond their everyday experience” (p.58). Al Sabah, a Kuwaiti scholar, expresses similar views (2001) finding that the “designs and decorative patterns found in Bedouin weaving reflect the austerity of the desert environment and are governed by principles of Islam which restrict the representation of the human figure” (p.40).

These authors all understood artworks as valuable curriculum content, not only as art forms in their own right, but also as reflections of the societies to which they belong. For example, through studying traditional *Alsadu* artefacts students could be introduced to early acts of creativity and learn how people in Kuwait have expressed themselves throughout time in art. Most importantly, they could learn to recognise artworks as

manifestations of the values held by people and societies in the same place at different times.

1.2.2. Building knowledge about artworks in the past

I learned from this part of the review that scholars have different views about what kind of information is the proper province of art history. For Hadjinicolaou (1978), art history has value only insofar as it can be applied to produce a better understanding of the images concerned and the times when they were produced. Smith (1987), however, believes that art historians seek to describe, analyse and understand individual artworks by identifying their place in the general scheme of history. For Pointon (1997), art history is a discipline that “examines the history of art and artefacts” (p. 21). Her well-known students’ handbook called *History of Art*, includes a list of questions that art teachers can use to help students investigate artworks and improve their knowledge of them (ibid, p.63) (see Figure 1). After reading Pointon’s book(1997), I concluded that art teachers in Kuwait should use the questions: “What?”, “Where?” and “Who made the work?”, to help children study and understand individual artworks and that these questions should be central to art teaching in today’s schools. If art teachers in Kuwait could be persuaded to use questions of this kind, the answers might provide a store of valuable art historical information that would help young people to better understand the value of art in their society.

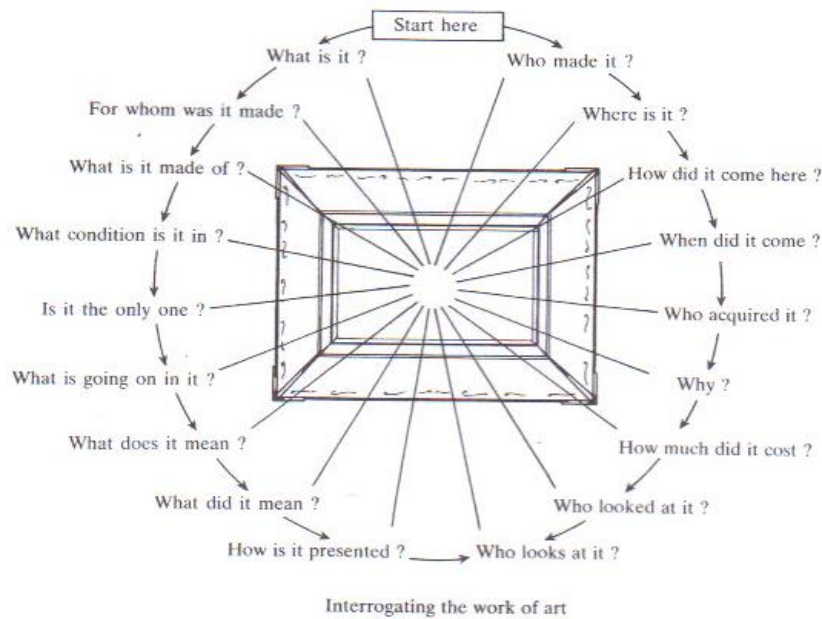


Diagram 1: Interrogating the work of art: Pointon (1997, p. 63).

Pointon asserts that learners can interrogate a work of art or artefact with no prior knowledge or information, an idea also put forward by Rod Taylor (1986) in *Educating for Art*. Taylor was a key figure in promoting the re-balancing of art education in the UK in the 1980s, when the teaching of art appreciation and art history in schools was reformed. I concluded that the model of art enquiry developed by him at the time, by focusing students' attention on: (i) process (ii) form (iii) content and (iv) 'mood', provides the basis for a helpful teaching strategy.

For Al Hurwitz and Day (2007), the main reason to teach art history is to:

...provide information and insights that will enlighten our understanding and appreciation of artworks and their significance and meaning (p.226).

After reading this, I realised that as an art teacher and researcher I needed to be in a position myself to provide students in Kuwait with the kind of information about an

artwork's historical context that would increase their understanding and appreciation of its importance and meaning to society.

Cotner (2001) and Seabolt (2001) emphasise the way in which art history engages with feelings at the same time as contributing to knowledge; they contend that people need to be trained in the ability to observe and evaluate sensory information about artworks, such as texture and colour. In contrast, Smith (1962) suggests that art history lessons should centre on (a) teaching the so-called basic concepts and principles of art history, and (b) “carrying out the specific kinds of activities by means of which art historians acquire art-historical knowledge” (p.32) at the expense of feelings.

At this stage of the research, I anticipated being able to provide my students with an introduction to art history by encouraging them to acquire certain kinds of art historical information: names and dates, for example; and to discuss some formal and stylistic features of artefacts (allowing for their age). I hypothesized that, once a teacher had provided them with some basic historical information about an artwork, it would be up to the students to research, describe, analyse and interpret it and that these activities in combination would develop their understanding and appreciation of its meaning and significance.

1.2.1.3. Learning about culture

At this point, since learning about culture had begun to seem one of the most important reasons for introducing art history into schools, I had to define culture. A simple and useful definition by Chalmers (1996) is that it refers to “a group's ways of perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving” (p.12). Similarly, Hall (1997) understands culture as

“the ‘giving and taking of meaning’ between the members of a society or group” (p.2).

The American art educator, McFee (1961) proposes a similar definition:

Culture is the pattern of interaction within a group of people. The pattern is determined by people’s shared values, beliefs, and opinions on acceptable behaviour. Within the pattern people have roles to play and work to do. The culture in part determines how the children are trained and how beliefs and values are maintained from generation to generation. Culture includes education, religion, science, art, folklore, and social organization (McFee, 1961, p.17).

In 2008, the Kuwaiti educator, Al Sabah, defined culture as “the totality of people’s socially transmitted behaviour patterns including arts, beliefs, institutions and all other forms of human endeavour” (p.281).

Sabol (2000) considers art history an essential part of art education, the aim of which is to fully understand the effects of culture on art and the properties of culture found in art. Her writing supports the view that historical and cultural learning should be combined in art education. As noted previously, at the time the research began, I was concerned about the neglect of Kuwait’s robust cultural crafts heritage and in particular of women’s handcrafts, no doubt because of the greatly changed lifestyles of women following the discovery of oil. When nomadic groups settled in urban areas, they began to purchase modern Western products and ignored their own cultural heritage. But the review of the literature convinced me that nations and societies cannot understand their present condition unless they investigate that of the past.

In 1969 the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education (1969, p.10) stated that any history taught in schools must be in the “national character” and that the consciousness of the child should be constructed through studies of national history. The review of the international

literature confirmed my view that the goals for teaching art history should include an understanding of Kuwait's national culture.

The art education textbook called *Art, Culture, and Environment*, by the American art educators McFee and Degge (1977) maintains that: "We (art educators) must remember that a people's identity is developed in relation to their background and that the art in it helped them learn and develop concepts of who and what they are" (p.10). Moreover, in discussing art history, the writers claim that each "designed object: has a message, function, and meaning for those who made it" (p.154). At the end of their book, when discussing what they mean by art and cultural development, they recommend that students should "study reports of a culture, the recorded history and contemporary culture of a place, and look at the way art developed in that society" (p.310). Their interpretation of art is an anthropological one and they perceive every artwork as a form of communication about culture and as carrying cultural meanings. They urge students to investigate both historical and contemporary art forms as a means of understanding people and cultures and the way in which cultures change over time. I took these as important points to bear in mind in this research.

As Mason (1990) and Addiss and Erickson (1993) all insist, the goals for teaching art history should be linked to the general goals of education. And, like McFee and Degge, they find unique merit in the way "art historical enquiry (can be used) as a means of better understanding our ...culture" (Addiss and Erickson, 1993, p. 148). McFee and Degge suggest that learning about culture should be a central curriculum aim for art education. They advocate the use of the historical enquiry method to learn about culture.

In their various ways, all these authors endorse the view that teaching about culture is important for many reasons: for example, it can help students to communicate effectively

(McFee, 1961), learn about their identity (McFee and Degge, 1977), appreciate and understand their culture (Addiss and Erickson, 1993) and understand their own national culture (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education in England and Wales, 1999). This complements the compulsory objectives for education published by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education in 1966:

To provide the student with sufficient knowledge about his society and environment to enable him to understand his environment as well as his country and the rest of the Arab world and their relations to the world (Kuwait Ministry of Education, 1966, pp.12-14).

It also reinforces statements by the Kuwait educator Al Sabah (2008) concerning the importance of teaching culture in Kuwaiti schools:

Our young people should be introduced to our cultural history and heritage so that they appreciate its contribution to world civilisation and the principal characters that made those contributions possible. Our teaching of history, our curricula and our history books would have to be re examined and revised so as to inculcate in the minds of our young the love and appreciation of their heritage. Our history teachers will have to be retrained and made aware of what is required of them in educating the young (Al Sabah, 2008, p.288).

Some of Al Sabah's points link up with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education objectives (1966), and also with the views expressed by McFee (1961, 1977) and Degge (1977).

They all agree that teaching the cultural heritage is important because it can help student to appreciate their own cultural heritage and create their own cultural identity.

An important point made by another American art educator, Freedman (2003b), is that culture has to be understood in terms of the lived experiences of students. She argues that this is one of the most important ways of increasing the recognition of differences and learning to tolerate them. According to Clarke (1996), art teachers in America are expected to analyse the cultural backgrounds of all their students and take into account

the living traditions of all members of the community and the society in which they live (Clarke, 1996, p.172). It appears that, because the population there is so culturally diverse, cultural identity and diversity have become central curriculum concerns. But in the Kuwaiti government schools which were the focus of this research there is no cultural diversity because enrolment is largely limited to the children of Kuwaiti nationals. In 1996, a Ministry of Education report noted an urgent need to establish a balance between protecting traditional Kuwaiti culture and adapting to the changes which have taken place in cultural development at local, regional and international levels. The report states that Kuwaiti society today emphasises modernity and progress, but in a rushed quest for the new people have neglected some beautiful and meaningful aspects of their past.

At the beginning of this research, I reviewed Western and Arabic literature on art education, art history and culture, to gain more knowledge of art history, how to teach it and why. After analysing the reasons for teaching it in schools, I concluded that the most important one for Kuwait was that it can help children to understand something of their national culture. I decided to adopt Addiss and Ericsson's idea (1993) of using art historical enquiry as "a means of better understanding culture" and also as a way of helping students to recognise manifestations in art of the value which culture has had in the past. I decided that McFee's (1961) definition of culture as the pattern of interaction within a group of people as "determined by people's shared values, beliefs and opinions on acceptable behaviour" (p.17) was the most suitable one for this research.

1.3. Understanding cultural heritage

This section reports the findings from a review of the literature on cultural heritage. Specifically I investigated theories and definitions of cultural heritage, and learned about

types of cultural heritage, and reasons for teaching it. Later I reflected on the situation as regards teaching cultural heritage in Kuwait.

This section of the chapter goes on to discuss the role of art in cultural learning, then the aims for teaching about the cultural heritage, and finally the potential contribution of art to cultural education. During this part of the literature review, I came across many scholars in art education and other disciplines researching cultural heritage. These included Kasten (2002), Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001), Kurin (2004) Graham (2002), Tejada (1985), Hunter (1993), Berry *et al.* (1992) and Mason (1999), all of whom have written about the need to consider issues of cultural heritage in education. My main aim in reading this literature was to learn how to conceptualise Kuwait's cultural heritage and discover instructional strategies that would help students to understand and maintain what the past has handed down to them. I found the ideas of the British educator Brian Graham very useful in this regard. In his paper *Heritage as knowledge: capital or culture?* he refers to the tangible and intangible heritage and the importance of both for understanding cultural identity. He describes them as “the continuous definition and re-affirmation of cultural identity, a screening of values, a use of memories of the past, a selective resource for the present” (Graham, 2002, p.1004). I also found the ideas of the Egyptian educator Mursi (2008) helpful, because he agrees that the relationship between the tangible and intangible heritage is important, and mentions that there is a need to protect the intangible heritage in Arab countries before it gets lost.

1.3.1. Definitions

UNESCO defines ‘cultural heritage’ as “a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions” (UNESCO, 2009, p.55).

This definition is very broad and includes all the environmental effects caused by the interaction between people and places through time, known as ‘the community heritage’. UNESCO states also that a heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of their cultural heritage which lies within the framework of public action that they wish to preserve and transmit to future generations.

According to the American art educators, Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001), national heritage is connected to, but not necessarily the same as, a national culture and can be described as “what people have inherited from the sociocultural group they belong to” (Ballengee-Morris *et al.*, 2001, p. 26). I agree with them that people should learn about their national culture so as to confirm their identity. In this research I focused on Kuwait’s national culture as a collective national culture. There was a sense therefore in which I rejected the notion of cultural diversity.

The Council of Europe (1998) holds the view that culture includes any material or non-physical human remains, comprising all the traces of human activity in an environment. Culture often represents the history and knowledge of the past handed down through generations and can be described “as cultural property ... through symbols ... a means of communicating social networks” (Kasten, 2002, p.1).

According to Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001), traditions and practices based on heritage tie culture and lived experiences together in the history and memory of the group to which an individual belongs. Heritage is revealed in a group’s traditions and songs (stories, poems, fairy-tales, myths), other narratives, visual art forms and visual culture, food, clothing, rituals and so on. These practices continue to operate over time and ensure continuity by connecting the past with the present; they also similarly record the dynamic and lasting changes which radically alter the culture and society (Brown, 1984).

At the time the present research was being conducted, Al Sabah was the director of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah (the House of Islamic Monuments) in Kuwait and a prominent member of the Board of the Council for Culture, Arts and Letters. In a review of the literature published in 2008, she suggests that the term *cultural heritage* is a shorthand way of referring to “the vast treasure of art work, architecture, artefacts, literature and other forms of intellectual work created by people throughout the ages” (Al Sabah, 2008, p. 281). She adds that this is what Kuwait is have inherited from past generations and what we should pass on to those who will come after us, preserved and well cared for.

The Egyptian educator Hassan agrees with the above view. In a paper called “Heritage for Development: Concepts and Strategic Approaches” (2008), he defines *cultural heritage* as follows:

I use ‘heritage’ here as an inclusive term for archaeological sites, monuments, collections of artefacts, historical records and archives, oral and musical traditions, crafts, cultural landscapes and historical places that are significant to a community, a nation, or/and humanity because of one or more sets of values assigned to them (Hassan, 2008, p.14).

The French professor of cultural policy studies, Isar (2004), has suggested that the interest in ‘heritage’ at the present time is a response to increased globalization. He believes that *heritage*, as a concept, has doubled in scope to embrace a growing number and variety of materials from the effects of past structures, cultural life, sites and artefacts.

1.3.2. Tangible and intangible heritage

I learned from Graham (2002), that heritage can be both intangible and tangible. Kurin (2004), the Director of the Center for Folk life and Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian Institution in the USA, has observed that the primary difference between them is that the

intangible cultural heritage can take the form of a social practice or tradition, and may not be a physical object, recording or written copy, image or video. It could be evident/transmitted in (to use her examples) a community's songs, the spiritual beliefs of a people, knowledge of the movement of stars or the meaningful weaving of patterns into cloth.

I learned that a group's tangible heritage, which can be found amongst concrete inherited materials, such as building statues or artefacts, is linked to intangible heritage in a symbiotic relationship. Bouchenaki (2004) makes it clear that "intangible heritage should be regarded as a larger framework within which [the] tangible heritage takes on shape" and adds that, whereas the

"tangible cultural heritage, be it a monument, a historic city or a landscape, is easy to catalogue ... [the] intangible heritage consists of processes and practices and accordingly requires a different safeguarding approach and methodology to the tangible heritage" (Bouchenaki, 2004, p. 3).

This implies that the intangible heritage, however difficult to catalogue, is just as important as the tangible heritage and we can learn about the former from the latter. For example, the patterns and motifs found in *Alsadu* weaving (tangible) have all been given names and traditionally many designs have particular symbolic meanings. Some patterns tell stories about the Bedouin way of life (intangible). Knowledge of the patterns of the Bedouin, known as the *wasm*, which refers to the mark of the ancient tribe, or the brand used by nomads to distinguish their own camels and cattle, can help us to identify the tangible heritage, namely the tribe, family and regional origins of an Arab weaver. Another Egyptian educator, Mursi (2008), states that the intangible heritage may be defined as the

practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated there with – that

communities, groups and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (p.246).

In discussing the relationship between the two types of heritage, Mursi states that the intangible heritage is often overlooked and needs urgent measures to protect it.

This coincides with the part of UNESCO's policy on *Enhancing the heritage and promoting creativity* (1995), which proposes that

Stress should be laid, in particular, on the close links that exist between the conservation and protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, the need to assemble and provide access to information about them and the need for a scientific description and analysis of them (UNESCO, 1995, p. 11).

In 2001, UNESCO issued its own definitions of heritage for use by its various member states. At the time the present research was being conducted, this was the definition of the intangible cultural heritage being used by the National Library of Kuwait:

the nation's oral heritage, folklore and spiritual culture, that consists of proverbs, habits, traditions, actions and individual and communal qualities that distinguish a society from others. This cultural heritage also includes family, wedding habits, arts, letters, songs, settlements and travelling, marriage and delivery, death, food, drinks, medicine and curing, typical Kuwaiti storytelling, crafts and activities of Kuwaitis in the past (UNESCO, 2001, p.1).

In a paper called *Tangible' and 'intangible' heritage: are they really Castor and Pollux?* Isar (2004) contends that we should aim at "an all-encompassing approach to the cultural heritage ... which takes into account the dynamic link between the tangible and intangible heritage and their deep inter dependence" (p.5). After reading this literature, I concluded that both types of heritage were important for this research.

1.3.3. The absence of research into cultural heritage in Kuwait

As discussed previously, Kuwait is a new nation with a diverse heritage of indigenous folk arts, made mainly from locally sourced materials, which are readily available. Many traditional crafts are not only useful, but are also beautiful and have the status of works of art. *Alsadu* is one of the most enduring of these, a form of weaving which has been practised for centuries by Bedouin tribes living in and around what is now called Kuwait.

Al Sabah (2008) asserts that each society and nation is responsible for creating and identifying what distinguishes its own culture from that of others. Otherwise, it becomes a society of individuals who have no use for common bonds or a coherent framework. She suggests that societies in new countries such as Kuwait can achieve a sense of cultural and social cohesion through gaining a thorough knowledge of their history and heritage.

Thus it seems clear that, to create cultural awareness among the general population, state education systems must identify the cultural heritage, promote the study of it and teach people how to care for and maintain it. As the American art educator, Davenport, points out (2000, p.369), teaching about the cultural heritage is especially important in primary schools so that the youngest members of society can learn to value themselves, their world and that of others. Unfortunately, as Al Sabah (2008) notes, the Kuwaiti education system had not fully appreciated or taken seriously these responsibilities at the time of this research.

Admittedly, there was some recognition by the Ministry of Education of the importance of cultural learning since the national report *Development of Education in the State of Kuwait* (2004-2008) had stated that the education system was facing a set of serious challenges, one of which was cultural. It identified “the cultural challenge” as one of the most serious, given that it relates to all society’s values and trends and that people in Kuwait were facing such rapid, dangerous change. On this basis, the report advocated

creating curricula targeted at upholding the national identity by consolidating all its positive cultural values. It maintained that Kuwait must not be separated from the world, but at the same time must conserve its own identity. The Ministry of Education has tried to meet this challenge by enunciating a need to maintain Kuwaiti identity through teaching about it in schools, although it has not been introduced into the national curriculum.

At this stage in the research I was influenced by Al Sabah (2008), who argues that it is important for young people in Kuwait to regularly visit museums, art galleries and archaeological sites as an integral part of their general education. She admits that devoting national resources to cultural purposes goes considerably beyond the mere opening of art galleries and museums and taking children there on school visits. Other publications convinced me also that visits of this kind are important for teaching and learning about culture, although they are not enough on their own.

1.3.4. Teaching about cultural heritage in schools

From the review of Western literature, I found that art history is widely considered to play an important role in learning about cultural heritage (Haakanson 2004, Thom 2004, Thomas 2004 and Graham 2002).

The American educator, Haakanson (2004), for example, describes cultural items such as American Indian artefacts as “clues to our cultural past” (p.5). He is interested in the suggestion that there are important cultural links for specific groups of people to be made between past, present and future. He argues that heritage items, such as artworks and crafts, are more than objects of art or representations of primitive peoples; for one thing, they may encapsulate the only history that now remains of some indigenous peoples. Crafts in Kuwait such as *Alsadu* for example, convey important information about

traditional materials that were used every day in the past to meet the needs and celebrations in Bedouin people's lives.

Thom (2004), another scholar of Native American culture, points out that:

“Native ways of thinking in the past, present, and future are connected. Items used in ceremonies from the past are still utilized by [for example] contemporary Native American people today. Whatever the item is, it is ‘alive’ and full of spirit. These items connect past, present, and future” (p.16).

However, it is important to recognise differences in cultural practices between tribal groups. She recommends “contact [with] the tribe of an item's origin to determine the appropriate way to handle it...by going to the source in a respectful way, you will usually get the accurate information you need” (Thomas, 2004, pp.9-10). Graham (2002) suggests that “the worth attributed to[tribal artefacts today] rests less in their intrinsic merit than in a complex array of contemporary values, demands and even moralities” (p.1006). As I read this I wondered if *Alsadu* weaving is like Native American art, both being tribal art forms.

Al Sabah (2008) is clear that when people are ignorant of their past, schools should teach them history. This puts a dual responsibility on those waging an educational campaign in Kuwait to: (a) educate people to recognise and appreciate national culture; and (b) encourage them to take responsibility for maintaining it. Both are an integral part of the process itself and should be practised together (Al Sabah, 2008).

For Hassan (2008), a nation's heritage is a series of fossil-like remnants of the past or the remains of ancestors. Above all it is a body of knowledge used as a proxy for objects in the physical supply of ideas and behavioural practices, which might fade with an older generation as a younger one emerges into a world of relativism. Ideas and practices from the past often continue to exist in parables and stories. Hassan says that they must be

transmitted through their narratives and perpetuated with the material props and settings which bring the heritage alive in the present.

I realised that the designs in the traditional craft of *Alsadu* weaving in Kuwait were an ideal choice for teaching cultural heritage because they communicate the stories and tales that young Bedu girls used to learn, together with this craft, from their mothers at the loom. These girls absorbed a repertoire of design motifs that was characteristic of their own tribe. Every motif in *Alsadu* has a meaning and there is a sense in which the weavers tell their life stories through their craft.

According to Graham (2002), “heritage itself is conceptualized as the meanings attached in the present to the past and is regarded as knowledge defined within social, political and cultural contexts” (p.1003). I realised that focusing my research on the crafts of *Alsadu* was important, also, because of the scarcity of research exploring the importance of heritage in the Arab world. Hassan (2008) notes that this world finds little value in the importance of places and landscapes, buildings and artefacts full of noises and smells, bodies and movements, all of which make up a part of the legacy.

1.3.5. Aims for teaching cultural heritage

Berry *et al.* (1992) argue that one of the main tasks of the school is to transmit the most important aspects of culture from one generation to another; they emphasise the role of cultural artefacts in heritage education. Tejada (1985) and Hunter (1993) both argue that students in schools should learn about the function of artefacts, *objects d’art*, buildings and sites in the local environment, because this helps them to recognise important values about their history and culture in all its uniqueness. In 1999 a National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education in England and Wales suggested that the

principal aim for teaching and learning culture and cultural development in schools was to “enable young people to recognise, explore and understand their own cultural assumptions and values” (p.55).

When the British curriculum expert Stenhouse (1967) wrote about formal education in the 1960s, he said the main purpose in most countries at the time was to enlist students in the national culture so that they could understand and appreciate their nation’s achievements. However, following the recognition that nations increasingly have communities which contain more than one ethnic element, it has become one of the purposes of cultural education in many Western countries to prepare students for change (Mason, 1999). Muñoz (1995) states that introducing young people to a diverse cultural heritage is important because it provides physical evidence of their past and gives a fragment of memory to focus on. At the same time, he is convinced that culture and heritage can be taught in a spirit of looking forward, but admits that dwelling on the past and glorifying national, regional and local values can be dangerous when they are closed to others and deny their values (Muñoz, 1995).

Interestingly, the World Heritage Convention does not speak explicitly of loss of identity as a specific threat to a culture, but sees such threats in a much wider sense. For example, the second paragraph of the preamble of the *Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage* begins:

Noting that the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction not only by traditional causes of decay, but also by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction...” (UNESCO, 1972, p.1).

At the end of this part of the review, I concluded that teaching cultural heritage should be a curriculum aim in schools primarily to ensure conservation and continuity with the past

and to give current and future generations a chance to come to understand, appreciate and take pride in it.

1.3.6. Potential Contribution of Art to Cultural Education

Tejada has pointed out that one important way to understand and appreciate culture is through the study of art, since it is not only a personal expression but also an expression of the society at work (Tejada, 1985). Allison (1985) supports this view, finding that art is one of the main forms that reflect cultural attitudes, values and beliefs. He states that works of art are influenced by the artist's immediate surroundings and often produced in a unique culture which implies something about a group at a particular point in time.

The Canadian art educator, Chalmers (1996), understands that studying a nation's collection of artefacts as especially useful for helping individuals to learn about their culture and heritage. He admits that one of the most common objections to teaching about culture and heritage through art is that it denies or minimizes the idea that art is, in the first place, about aesthetic enjoyment; however, in most societies, art is an effective and enjoyable way of transmitting culture. Like Crapo (2003) and McFee (1991), he argues that students should learn about and understand art in the context of its social and cultural status, so as to avoid missing important information about changes that happen both in life and art.

According to Clarke (1996), art is essentially a symbolic form of communication about cultural tradition. The art educators, Freedman (2003b) and Best (1986), believe art also promotes social cohesion in an aesthetic form through the display of cultural values and beliefs and makes them concrete and recognisable. They claim that when art education is grounded in cultural learning this gives students the opportunity to view it as a record of

history and society and gain a better understanding of the importance of their cultural heritage and identity.

I concluded from all these writers that it was important to introduce learning about a specific art tradition into the school curriculum in Kuwait, as a way of encouraging students to understand their cultural heritage in general. The definition of the cultural heritage by the American art educators, Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001) seemed to me the most proper one for this. I used Graham's two key points (2002) about cultural heritage as a framework for developing my curriculum ideas: first that the cultural heritage is both tangible and intangible and, second, that selective use of memories of the past is a resource for the present.

Summary of Findings

The first part of this review of the literature on art history revealed many views and definitions of art history, which required much thought and led to the following key findings for the research. Art history deals with knowledge derived from the investigation of visual culture as primary data; studying an artwork, artefact or craft and its relationship to other visual forms brings insights into history and culture. I selected Greer's view (1987) as the most suitable one for the present research, since he understands the study of artworks as the best way of learning about the culture of previous societies.

Most art historians seek to describe, analyse and interpret individual artworks by identifying their place in the scheme of history. They gather information about them and offer interpretations. They often use cross disciplinary theories to analyse artworks and artists and the conceptual influences on their work. They study works of art as historical documents. Art history, in a broader sense, is a sub-section of history devoted to a

particular kind of human activity, namely, the making of artworks or artefacts; that is, material objects which have more than one function. Historians are interested in the fact that man is influenced by the society in which he lives and that each person expresses and somehow reflects the whole of society.

I came across many reasons for teaching art history and concluded that the three most important ones are: to learn about humanity, to acquire knowledge of art history; and to learn about culture. From Addiss and Ericsson (1993) I learned that one use of art history is to understand one's culture better and this became a most important focus for the research.

From a review of the literature about culture, I adopted McFee's definition (1961) as the most suitable for this research. Furthermore, I found the definition of cultural heritage by Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001) to be the most appropriate one. After reading the literature on culture and heritage, I used Graham's ideas (2002) to help me to identify the two types of heritage which are important to consider in Kuwait and developed an argument to show why this subject should be included in the school curriculum.

CHAPTER TWO: DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM MODEL

2.0. Introduction

This part of the literature review examined models of art curricula and assessed their capacity to inform this research. It helped me to develop the conceptual framework for my own curriculum model. I searched for models which included history of art in particular. The aim at this stage was to enhance my understanding of ways to design a curriculum for teaching art history and culture at primary school level. This chapter begins by discussing the curriculum models I reviewed for art education, and some of the aims and objectives for art history teaching that I found and that opened up cultural questions. Then it examines the choice of content for my own curriculum and the artefacts. After this, the chapter reports on and analyses four teaching/learning strategies: talking about artworks (questioning and enquiry), making crafts, visiting museums and using the sketchbooks which I elected to use. At the end of this chapter, I present the new curriculum model that I developed at the conclusion of this part of the research.

2.1. Curriculum Models for Teaching Art History

2.1.1. Chapman

In *Discover Art*, Chapman (1987) presents an art curriculum model which emphasises art appreciation and an awareness of art in everyday life. Instruction is organised into three areas: creating art, looking at art and living with art. Her school programme begins by teaching basic concepts of art and the skills that students should acquire to succeed in the remaining lessons. In the lessons for grades 4-6, the procedure is for the teacher to: (i) encourage students to discuss art topics; (ii) submit their own ideas; (iii) consider works

of art that reflect the artists' interpretations of natural forms; and (iv) study artworks and make drawings of them. Chapman (1989) views the main function of art in general education as the transfer of knowledge about art (Charles, 1994, pp.124-125).

Chapman's curriculum framework for art education (1978) has three goals: developing personal expression and response, developing awareness of the artistic heritage and developing an awareness of art in society. I was most interested in the second and third goals. By 'awareness of the artistic heritage' I understood her to mean that children should learn how members of past artistic communities generated ideas, described art and used visual features for self-expression. By 'awareness of art in society', I understood her to mean that children should learn how people in present-day society and other epochs created art forms, perceived visual forms in their environment and used visual qualities to express their beliefs when they interpreted visual forms as social expressions.

Chapman (1978) suggests that teachers should introduce children to their artistic heritage through visits to museums and galleries and meetings with local artists, craft workers and designers. She states that "comparisons should center on similarities in the process of creating art" (p.154). Collections of art should be organised thematically, so as to familiarise children with their artistic heritage; the collections should include examples of craft and other kinds of artefact as well as fine art and other art forms. Guest artists or craftworkers should also be invited into schools to talk to children. Discussions should be held about works of art which show the artist's interest in nature, imagination and everyday life (pp.154-155). According to Cox (2000), "knowledge and understanding of the work of artists is a relatively new aspect of the curriculum for many primary school teachers" in the UK (p.105). The American educator, Freedman (2003a) agrees with Chapman and Cox that studying the work of professional artists is important. She states that students should take professional artists and designers as their exemplars and be

given a chance to comment on past and contemporary works of art. Chapman stresses that art is means to express not only individual ideas but also cultural ones. She advocates connecting the art curriculum with social studies so as to clarify the presence of visual impacts in everyday life (p.243). I was impressed with her ideas that the art curriculum should introduce school children to art in the local community, neighbourhood, city, or region, and that they should meet community workers, painters, authors and artists. She recommends them to look at paintings and pictures of the neighbourhood and discuss the reasons for the existence of these works and understands this as a way in which teachers can connect art and social studies.

Both Stone (2001) and Chapman argue that it is important for children to visit museums. In this regard, Chapman states, “museum collections offer the chance to contemplate cultural achievements; they [also] represent catalysts for educational instruction” (p.8).

According to Chapman (1978), “Children should examine works of art that represent nature, people and the constructed environment closely as sources of inspiration for their own art. When possible, a variety of art forms should be made available for study” (p.124). In her book *Approaches to art in education*, she encourages discussion as a means of teaching about art works. Her keys to successful discussion are: “(i) arousing children’s curiosity; (ii) posing ‘Why’, ‘How’ and ‘What if’ questions; (iii) summarizing what has been discovered; (iv) noting parallels between children’s observations about the work and their everyday experiences; (v) praising astute observations and clarifying unclear responses; and (vi) providing a model of enjoyment, discovery and questioning by the tone of ... voice and tempo of the discussion” (p.177).

I became enthusiastic about Chapman’s ideas and planned to adopt them as follows: First, I decided to use the second and third goals of her curriculum model as aims and objectives for cultural learning in my own curriculum framework. Second, I planned to

include visits to museums and galleries, to encourage students to investigate the museum collections and to look at, talk about and discuss examples of crafts and artefacts. Third, I was keen to invite local artists or craftworkers to participate and tell stories about their experiences; and fourth, I wanted to involve children in the discussion of specific works of art that revealed the artist's interest in nature, imagination and everyday life. All these features were missing from the Kuwait art curriculum and I wanted to introduce them as a means to introducing art history and a cultural content.

Chapman offers suggestions also for engaging children in making art. She reminds us that they are adept at making useful things, have a sense of celebration and enjoy devising ways to change or improve their environment (p. 189). She points out that, with sufficient guidance and practice, they can learn to use a wide collection of hand tools and that in the upper primary grades, children become more efficient at controlling many variables at once in their art work and hence special activities should be designed which lead them to bring experimental approaches in their work. They should engage in practical art activities that help them to understand why people in their own culture produce, acquire, display and preserve works of art (Chapman, 1978).

2.1.2. Hickman

The British art educator Hickman (1994) suggests that students should be encouraged to learn about art and design in four main ways: through the process of creating, researching, responding and reflecting. Specifically he states that, "An overall general strategy for facilitating meaningful responses to art should be a synthesis of pupil-centered and subject-centered approaches, based on four areas of activity– Reacting, Researching, Responding and Reflecting" (p.50). I was interested in all four activities, since Hickman is convinced that using this curriculum framework ensures a student's personal

engagement with art and recognises the importance of the relationship between themselves, as observers and the artwork (the observed).

Hickman (2001) shares some of Chapman's ideas about engaging children in practical art activities and stipulates that: (i) students should have first-hand experiences of their built environment; (ii) learning should be heuristic, building in a structured way upon what children already know, feel and understand; and (iii) students should have opportunities to respond creatively to their own aesthetic experiences. He writes that responding to art by making it ensures that students will learn about it in a way which is meaningful to them and are not simply given second-hand information; this allows for a genuine experience. According to Hickman (2005 b), making art encourages students to take personal responsibility for their actions in this process. I was influenced by Hickman's ideas and decided to include craft production in my curriculum and follow his guidelines for designing practical activities. First of all, I wanted to ensure that the students gained first-hand experience of the traditional women's craft of *Alsadu* and would weave some pieces themselves after being taught the relevant skills and techniques. Then, I wanted to encourage them to apply these techniques to their own design. I wanted them to be taught weaving in an orderly manner and discover what they actually felt and understood about this. Finally, I wanted the students to have aesthetic experiences and the chance to take personal responsibility for their own artwork by learning about weaving and its part in their culture, and I also wanted them to respond creatively to traditional craft skills by using them to make something useful for today. Freedman (2000), Anderson and Milbrandt (2005), Eisner (2002) and Hickman (1994, 2001, 2005b) all refer to art-making as 'authentic' when it involves first-hand experience which is not simulated or removed from the methodologies, practices and concerns of the artists themselves. Thus, authenticity became a key concept in designing my art curriculum.

Thistlewood (1986) points out that teaching art history without providing opportunities for students to experience process and conflict denies their need to express themselves. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Taylor (2000), writing about his work in Critical Studies, emphasizes four themes in bringing together “the practical, theoretical and historical aspects of the subject” (p.93). He reports that his model of art criticism ensures that all students will benefit from rigorous technical practice in art as well as from studying and discussing artworks.

Another finding of the review of the literature on art curriculum models was that using sketchbooks on a regular basis is considered important in Western countries. In his article ‘*School Students’ Responses to Architecture: A Practical Studio Project*’. Hickman (2001) describes how he encouraged students to make full use of notebooks to collect information about art and to record their visual and verbal art knowledge in notes, sketches and words. In practice, this involved students in closely observing local artworks and making annotated sketches of them. He understood it as important that they should examine artworks at first hand, in order to get an idea of their details and some sense of their power.

I decided to introduce sketchbooks into my curriculum model and use them for investigating *Alsadu* crafts. Admittedly, using sketchbooks is not common in Kuwait, but I became interested in using them as a tool to help students undertake research into art and discover and appreciate the fact that artists clarify their ideas by collecting information, making sketches and developing designs.

2.1.3. Erickson

According to Erickson (1993), the history of art is an important subject for all elementary school students and it is a rich source of general educational content. Her books outline three methods of teaching art history, namely, through artworks, information and enquiry. I became interested in teaching art history as enquiry through a mixture of student-led investigations of specific examples of art and transmission of art historical information. As Erickson states (1993), “Information and enquiry are interrelated” (p.132). Students acquire information when teachers pose questions about artworks which lead to further student-led enquiry.

Erickson’s article *Association Teaching Art History as an Enquiry Process* (1983) states that the art of historical enquiry gives structure to the discipline of art history and leads to historical understanding and an appreciation of works of art. She proposes historical interpretation as a way of investigating artworks which challenges students to search for meanings which may have been expressed and understood in the era when they were produced. She points out that we recognise most easily the need to understand the historical context of a work of art when it is remote and incomprehensible. More familiar works, however, require some insight in order to be understood historically. When Bolin (1992/1993), discusses the need to draw on the academic discipline of Material Culture Studies in art education, he expresses a similar view, arguing that questions must be raised not only about what the artefacts look like but ‘also about those who make, use, respond to and preserve’ them (p.154).

According to Erickson (1993), there are three kinds of activity in art lessons focusing on historical enquiry: introduction, development and conclusion. Introductory activities should provide students with basic information about time and place. Development activities should focus students’ attention on specific works of art from a given historical

period. In the concluding phase, the teacher should draw out some ideas about the relationship between the artworks and issues in the students' lives. All three phases should end with suggestions, questions and discussion. I used her principles of teaching art history through enquiry in my curriculum (pp. 156-157).

Following the general overview of curriculum models that cover art history, I decided to adopt three main ideas from Erickson (1993), Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001). First I decided to teach art history through student-led investigations of specific examples of art rather than by imparting factual information about them. Erickson influenced me to adopt a questioning-enquiry based approach to art historical learning. I adopted her enquiry strategy for studying artefacts, because I saw it as an aid to understanding culture which would challenge students to ask their own questions about artists (in this case, weavers) and artefacts (*Alsadu* weaving) from the past. The most important assumption that I adopted from Erickson was that "students [can] learn how to use art-historical enquiry as a means of better understanding our visual culture" (p. 148).

Chapman's ideas (1978) also strongly influenced my curriculum's broad conceptual framework, in particular her suggestion that children should be introduced to their artistic heritage and art in society through visits to museums and galleries, meetings with craft workers, and researching artworks.

Hickman's (2001) advice about giving students opportunities to make art was also followed. After the students had studied and investigated artworks at first hand, I felt it was important that they should develop ideas for making their own artworks. I also adopted Hickman's idea of using sketchbooks as a tool for researching art throughout the curriculum unit, and in particular for collecting historical and cultural information and drawing sketches and designs to help them develop ideas for their own work.

At this point it was necessary to think more deeply about the aims and the content of the proposed curriculum and the way in which art historical enquiry could be used to help students to understand their cultural heritage.

2.3. Aims and objectives for teaching cultural heritage

The literature review reported in the last chapter had convinced me that teaching cultural heritage is very important for understanding culture, so I read more about ways of putting this into practice using artefacts in art education. As the American educator, Burkhart (2006), points out, material forms and objects embody and perpetuate ideas about cultures and regions, religions, nations and identities, individuals and collectives (p.33). He defines cultural artefacts as man-made objects which reveal historical information about a society's cultural beliefs, values and traditions. In Csikszentmihaiyi's view (1993), these objects reinforce the stability of our sense of who we are and give permanent form to our views of ourselves. They reveal the continuity of the self over time and things; function as symbols of the value of relationships and give concrete evidence of one's place in the social network I was persuaded by Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) to think about the way that, art objects in addition to their decorative function tell a human story which helps people to understand who they are, where they came from and what they believe.

Chung (2003), Higgs and McNeal (2006) and Marcus (2007) all argue that school children should have access to cultural artefacts, which they describe as concrete manifestations of artistic expression, and a part of the children's cultural heritage, embodying scientific discoveries and social and political developments. As such they can be used effectively to introduce complex concepts, values, traditions and ideas from different cultures to enhance the learning experience. When students study a variety of cultural artefacts, Chung (2009) suggest, this can add to their understanding of the variety

of cultures in the surrounding world. I came to understand teaching the cultural heritage as crucial to understanding culture today and adopted this as the goal of my curriculum for Kuwait.

2.4. Crafts/Artefact based content

Some of the literature that I reviewed on craft education also suggests that including craft as content in art education is very important for understanding culture. According to Anderson and Milbrandt (2005), the main purpose of using artefacts such as crafts as curriculum content is to stimulate learners to be creative and express themselves. The artefact functions as a springboard from which to imagine an experience which visualizes all the elements in a product. Some scholars of crafts suggest that they serve many purposes. In addition to their functional and decorative uses, they tell stories of human identity and beliefs and act as windows and mirrors of life and culture. In this way they provide an arena in which to awaken appreciation and the understanding of human emotions, ideas and objectives. For Brodie (1997), artefacts can be viewed as texts which “can be scrutinized, interpreted and their meanings communicated to others” (p.76).

When students study the artefacts of cultural or national groups, Chapman suggests, teachers should “point out how people use materials native to their area and how they use imported or rare materials” (p. 322). I chose crafts as my curriculum content in the hope that this would help students understand Bedouin society in the past.

The literature that I read on craft education and curriculum supported my belief that choosing a craft as content for art lessons would help students to understand cultural values and beliefs. I shared the idea of Rogoff (1998), among others, that visual images and material artefacts and presentations all express people’s thoughts, beliefs and attitudes; and that they communicate and form the identities of individuals and groups,

because they embody their values and beliefs and reflect their culture at specific points in time.

According to Duncum (2002, p.6), combining the making of art with an analysis of artefacts is useful for helping students to explore meanings. I adopted this idea and thought it would be helpful to show specific examples of *Alsadu* artefacts to encourage students to make some themselves and also to explore their cultural meanings.

What Karppinen calls (2008) “Craft-art” means much more than simply producing crafted items; it also means “demonstrating one’s skills, knowledge, thoughts, experiences, perceptions and sensations to other people” (p.84). By ‘craft-art’, I think she is referring to an approach to craft education which emphasises creative artistic thinking. From my experience as a primary art teacher, I knew that students readily acquire craft knowledge, and skills and can learn to respect what is handmade, but I realised that they could acquire knowledge about craft cultures as well.

In this regard, Freeman (2003a) writes that “When students develop a deeper understanding of their visual experiences, they can look critically at surface appearances and begin to reflect on the importance of the visual arts in shaping culture, society and even individual identity” (p.xi). Garber (2002), discussing the development of craft skills, states that learning how to make a craft involves imagination, creative thinking and reflection, as well as challenging students to find solutions to the practical problems that occur at all the stages of the making process. Writing about art education in the UK in 2002, Mason and Houghton pointed out that at a time when art making was experiencing a fundamental paradigm shift away from craft, it connoted something very important, “namely, the skilled knowledge that is derived from fashioning artefacts, artwork, systems and objects competently and well” (p. 62). I recognised that the circumstances in which my curriculum experiments would take place in Kuwait were not the same, but the

timing seemed right for thinking about traditional crafts and how to maintain them, before they disappeared completely. As Chapman (1978) exhorts, “in order to restore a sense of the social importance of objects, we must develop greater awareness of the way in which handcrafted and machine made products express the beliefs of people and influence their conduct” (p. 322).

According to Dennis (1994), people ‘read’ art images and artefacts in different ways at different times, in the light of rhetorical formations in the place concerned. Thus, attempting to increase students’ appreciation of artworks or crafts without first understanding the importance of the forces that determine their time and location denies these students the opportunity to fully understand them. In 1970 Feldman commented, “We want the pupil to know something about an art object because he has seen that knowledge embodied in the form of the work” (p.92) and the literature about teaching art history suggests that methods of art criticism have expanded since then: but I found it useful at this point in the research to consider suggestions arising from material culture studies for ways of exploring everyday objects. According to Burkhart (2006), students like to explore things that are relevant to their own lives. It is of interest to them, therefore, to consider how artefacts reflect the values of their community, in terms of their functions and symbolic and cultural impact. Thus I decided to adopt in my curriculum model Chapman’s and Burkhart’s ideas (1978) about studying artefacts as a means to understanding an aspect of national culture and for this purpose selected specific examples of *Alsadu* crafts as lesson content.

2.5. Teaching/learning strategies

Taken as a whole, the review of the literature on art curriculum identifies four teaching learning strategies that were incorporated into my own model. These were: (i)

questioning enquiry, (ii) craft making, (iii) visiting museums and (iv) using sketchbooks. They all sought to enhance children's critical understanding of the cultural meanings of artefacts and the role which this knowledge plays in the construction of self- and cultural understanding. They are examined in turn below and the advantages of each are explored with reference to the development of a curriculum model intended to introduce art historical and cultural learning into art education in Kuwait.

i. Questioning enquiry

What I had read about the questioning-enquiry method of teaching art history (see previous chapter, p.33) had alerted me to the idea that questions about artefacts/artworks are useful educational tools in teaching art history. But further reading in art education taught me that the successful use of questions depends on two kinds of teaching skill. First, the teacher must be able to frame questions with sufficient breadth and depth to cover the whole discussion. Second, s/he must be able to connect with students by responding to their subsequent questions, in ways that will help them to understand the issues under discussion (Al Hurwitz and Madeja, with Eldon Katter, 2003, p.63).

According to Marshall and Reason (2007),

An attitude of enquiry starts with learning to ask good questions and a commitment to a serious exploration of the implications of asking. It means really wanting to find out about something of significance in our world and seeking and working with feedback of some kind as research progresses (p.371).

Marshall (2010) advises teachers to pose questions which challenge students to think through their own ideas and connect them up with other ideas, such as: "What is this like? Or 'If this is like that, then what does that mean?'" (p.19). To help learner-artists extend or project their ideas, he suggests asking questions such as, 'How could you expand or

extend that? ‘How could you vary that or make it more extreme?’”(p.21). For Chanda (2007), formulating questions is probably the most important part of studying artefacts, because it requires probing for something beyond what is already clearly there. She maintains that teachers can raise historical questions with students about sources of evidence, for instance, or the methods used to gather and analyse the data and the reasoning used to formulate their interpretations (pp.28-35).

I realised that I could use Erickson’s questioning enquiry method to study *Alsadu* artefacts; and that it would be important, as Freedman (2000) states, that students’ interpretations were valued and challenged, expert opinion was represented, and that “knowledge was acquired as part of a negotiated system of information” (p.321).

Furthermore, I was persuaded by Clarke (1996), among others, that any interpretations made by teachers *Alsadu* artefacts must refer to their social and historical contexts and take into account the living traditions of the members of the community and society in which they and their students lived today (p.172). I decided to encourage teachers to use questioning and enquiry to help them narrate the necessary historical information.

According to Erickson (1993), children find it easy to understand narratives which tell stories through time “even though they may not be able to define the word ‘history’” (p.136).

Reading more about the role of questioning in the study of artworks confirmed my resolve to adopt Erickson’s question/enquiry instructional strategy in the research, and to let students ask questions themselves about the cultural artefacts and crafts that they were studying.

ii. Craft making

According to Freedman (2000),

Students make art to express not only things about themselves, but about their surroundings, their social context and the things that act upon them. Students make art not merely for its formal, technical, or even private value, but to communicate about social issues in social ways (p.323).

I sensed that it was important to inspire students as much as possible to engage creatively with forms of art that are not typically included in art education in Kuwait. According to Anderson and Milbrandt (2005), “We make art to make sense of things, to give meaning to our existence” (p.139). Artists connect ideas and emotions through the physical act of making aesthetic forms to represent their meanings’ moreover, representing an idea or feeling in a visual form encourages students to reflect on aspects of the unseen which are often unnoticed. Eisner has argued that students learn to become involved, informed and active in their surroundings through examining the ideas and feelings which they associate with the events of life. If teachers encourage this, it helps students to discover their own identity (Eisner, 2002). In this educational process, students can discover their role in the design of their own experience and thus learn to form their identity.

Hickman (2005b) is of the view that, to gain insight through self-expression, students must be aware of the nature of their own thinking. He understands one aim of art education as that of encouraging individual students to take personal responsibility for their actions in the process of making their own work, and allowing them to create the meaning which comes from these actions. Many art educators agree with this. According to Eisner (2002), “A major aim of art education is to promote the child’s ability to develop his/ her mind through the experience that the creation or perception of expressive form makes possible” (p.24). Hickman (2005b) states that art in particular helps students

make sense of themselves and their environment at an appropriate stage in their development. He suggests that “a person educated to experiment, accept mistakes; try new ways of looking at and inventing things will also be someone who questions the status quo and contributes to the dynamism of society” (Hickman, 2005 b, p.104). Eisner shares this view (2002), observing that “work in the arts...is a way of creating our lives by expanding our consciousness, shaping our dispositions, satisfying our quest for meaning, establishing contact with others and sharing a culture” (p.3).

Hickman (2005b) explains that art education gives students a voice in the development of the educational process because it gives them opportunities to identify activities and areas of investigation for themselves and empowers them to control their own learning. As a result, “If the young were enabled to identify alternative possibilities and to choose for themselves in accord with what they thought preferable, they might have reasons for learning to learn on their own initiative” (Greene, 1995, p.177).

I decided to give students in Kuwait the chance to try new activities in the curriculum unit by making *Alsadu* crafts and learning from this experience. According to Guay (2002), learning from experience engages the hearts and minds of elementary children in ways that help them make sense of life and helps them develop “understanding and empathetic, or as needed, oppositional, critical relationships with their environments” (p.304). While I agreed with this, my experience as an art teacher had convinced me that learning from making art depends greatly on the kind of project that the teacher asks the students to carry out. If they are to grow and develop both psychologically and socially through making art in school, they need assistance and encouragement to build their own meanings rather than simply accepting the stereotyped meanings of authorities, such as teachers and texts (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005, p.144).

As a result of reading the literature about teaching others to make art and craft objects, I decided to include this in the curriculum and emphasise the need for students to take personal responsibility for their own artwork. I decided to include craft making in lessons to help students to value and empathise with *Alsadu* craftworkers and so to understand their culture better.

iii. Visiting museums

The review of the art education literature confirmed my intuition that art offers a way to document a nation's history for its citizens. It was clear to me that it has potential to help students to understand themselves and others and that this is particularly important in teaching and learning about people from different cultures and their points of view. This literature stressed that assisting students to understand art and its power to document and initiate cultural change is one role of museums and that they are very important cultural institutions. The literature on museum education in the West is clear that art museums in particular, are places of learning, experiencing and dealing with ideas and objects and institutions that support lifelong education. Pitman, for example (1999), writes that museums provide visitors with places for reflection and physical control, as well as posters, maps and programmes to connect with the images and ideas in the context of objects. Moreover, Paris and Hapgood (2002) describe them as informal learning environments where there are objects and experiences which stimulate curiosity and argue this learning can be extended to the classroom and beyond.

Museums are visual repositories of history, culture and knowledge. Cultural artefacts, including pictures, give us a sense of place and time (Muffoletto, 2001). According to the anthropologist Miller (1998), museums not only collect, preserve and display objects of all kinds, but help to identify the types of interest that we give to the objects.

The art education literature from the West documents the importance of visiting art museums. The American Professor of Visual Art Education, Stone (2001) suggests that because “viewing works of art can lead to an understanding of the relationship between humans and material objects and, ultimately an appreciation for the human creative spirit”, it is imperative to develop ways to continually expose students to such experiences (p. 8). He states that museum collections not only offer “the chance to contemplate cultural achievements; they [also] represent catalysts for educational instruction” (p.8). Moreover access to museums at an early age paves the way for the further exploration of a culture by developing the skills necessary to interpret visual language. Another art educator writing about museums, Walsh-Piper (1994) notes, “The experience of a museum visit, from the aesthetics of the architectural setting to the personal encounter with a great work of art, is one with the potential for wonder and awe, creating memorable images for the child” (p. 1).

Chapman (1978) recommends short visits to either a local art museum or an artist’s studio as a means to develop students’ appreciation of the artistic heritage. During these trips, she advises teachers to keep young children actively involved in “looking and seeing activities” to help students to think about the work of artists (p.155). Moreover, in her art curriculum model she encourages teachers to organise meetings for students with local artists, craft workers and designers to talk about their work, ask questions and discuss examples. Of course it is also important that children should listen to adults working as artists or craftspeople talking about art in a clear, concrete manner, as long as it is appropriate to their level of understanding. She suggests that when children and adults discuss art, they join together in the process of looking at a work, allowing it to shape their feelings and discovering how it was made. Although different views are expressed in this literature about ways of using museums, I agree with Chung (2009), that “the

museum [should] invite visitors not simply to ‘look at’ cultural artifacts but to really understand their history” (p.38).

To a significant degree, learning in museums comes from social interaction, because adults and children often learn from each other in family and other kinds of social group (Pitman, 1999). Many Western art educations are convinced that teaching and learning to appreciate original artworks and understand their cultural context is essential in art education. As White assures us, art museums in America nowadays assume greater responsibility for the planning and development of technical education materials and providing services to schools than they did in the past (White, 1999). Moreover, the literature implies that in Western countries the role and purpose of museums is still evolving and changing in an effort to better serve local communities. According to Williams and Blackmon, museums are no longer mere repositories of beautiful and valuable objects, but educational institutions which provide an explanation of the context of different cultures and peoples (Williams, 1997; Blackmon, 1999; Pitman, 1999).

In Kuwait I had never visited museums with students as an art teacher. But through this review of the literature and my observations of students visiting museums and galleries in the UK, I realised that to do so is very important. I was motivated by these ideas to include a museum visit in my curriculum. Chapman, in particular, encouraged me not only to introduce children to a craft museum, but also to meet with local crafts persons. Thus, although the Kuwaiti art curriculum did not encourage teachers and students to visit museums or meet local artists, I came to the conclusion that they were essential as a strategy for teaching art history and understanding culture in the curriculum model that I was developing at this stage of the research.

iv. Using sketchbooks

According to an official government publication called the National Curriculum Art Craft and Design Sketchbook (1994), produced in the UK, sketchbooks are called by many names including 'journal', 'visual diary', 'drawing file' and 'memoranda of work'. While I was studying in England, I learned that students use them to collect many different kinds of things they care about, such as pieces of fabric, natural objects, magazine clippings and pictures, or copies of poems they have enjoyed. They are also used to record students' feelings and ideas about people, places and things. In this way they become a special kind of diary or journal of ideas and experiences which includes everything that catches the students' eye.

The literature on the use of sketchbooks refers to them as a system for storing a set of observations, ideas, evidence and information for children to retrieve and use later in their craft, art or design work – things which have been collected with a particular piece of work in mind, or a customised group of things, such as work in other crafts, art and design activities (Leach, 2005). Moreover, Leach advises teachers to encourage students to use them to write down notes about developing ideas for their own artworks, for example, about colours, sizes or anything else that strikes them as important but has not been represented already in drawings (pp.34-35).

According to the American scholars Delacruz and Bales (2010), sketchbooks are used like scrapbooks to gather information and represent stories of shared history. They are compilations of creative collections, photos, memorabilia and decorative motifs which give back a symbolic value, recalling people and events. According to these writers, artistically designed page layouts and decorations add visual and aesthetic pleasure and convey the significance of people, events and remembered places. They note that sketchbooks allow artists to track their development over time and work through ideas

and we see in them reminders of many works which have been collected in one place. In addition to graphics, documentation and plans for works of art in the future, sketchbooks can house a curious set of ephemera, photographs and newspaper clippings.

For Robinson (1999), ownership of a sketchbook promotes a child's self-esteem and enables him or her to develop a positive attitude to work across the curriculum. I considered this another important reason for using sketchbooks in the context of art education, since she points out that anything that conserves the value of work within an artistic tradition can be used successfully in a child's sketchbook. As Morgan (1993) maintains, "Artists and designers keep sketchbooks for very good reasons, filling them with collections of drawings and annotations because it helps them to think, to find out and build up relevant source materials for their work" (quoted in Leach, 2005. p.34). She suggests that students can use them to gather visual information by drawing man-made objects and the natural environment and to experiment with a variety of ideas and materials as starting points for further work. The literature about sketchbooks that I reviewed mentions that they can play an important role as part of a visit to an exhibition. In her book *Sketch-books: Explore and Store*, Robinson (1999) claims that they can become a forum also for the development of creative ideas, using graphic design processes. In discussing the value of sketchbooks, she believes that they should focus on process rather than finished pieces of work and that this is what makes them important in the assessment and evaluation of student learning. They are indicators of a child's artistic development if applied over a period of time. Her book concludes that a sketchbook is a record of both the student and teacher and is a reminder to both of them of important elements of progress.

After reading this information about sketchbooks I decided to use them to help students to appreciate the nature of artworks and artists, investigate craft processes and products, collect information about them and develop ideas for their own artwork.

2.6. Framework for teaching art history in Kuwait

In this chapter, I present the curriculum model that I developed as the outcome of the literature reviews. But, while reviewing the different kinds of texts gave me a better understanding of art education priorities in America and the UK, it was difficult to see how all these new ideas could be integrated into primary education in Kuwait. At the beginning of the study, I was not clear what genres of art are acceptable as content for art lessons. To arrive at a theoretical framework, I had to internalise a set of concepts to do with art history, cultural heritage and art learning that would enable me to answer my own research questions and use them to develop and test out an experimental curriculum.

I decided early on to apply an artefact based approach and focus on the study of a traditional craft (*Alsadu* weaving); also, to apply Erickson's ideas about art historical enquiry as a means to understand the cultural and art heritage. I wanted the students to be actively involved in investigating the meaning, designs, subject-matter, symbolism, function, technique and cultural value of each artefact selected for study. I was persuaded by Freedman (2000) that "The purpose of art education is not to educate people about only the technical and formal qualities of artifacts but to extend the meaning of those qualities and artifacts to show their importance in human existence" (p.324).

I selected Erickson's questioning/enquiry method of studying artefacts in the hope that this would encourage students to investigate the place of *Alsadu* weaving in Kuwaiti culture. I also planned to involve them in learning how to weave *Alsadu* designs, and use

a museum visit and sketchbooks as strategies for increasing their understanding of national culture. The enquiry-based questioning learning strategy that I developed set out in particular to increase students' understanding of *Alsadu* woven artefacts.

The review of the literature about art history had revealed that it can be taught in schools in many ways. It indicated that a number of different assumptions and methods could be adopted for including it in the general school curriculum. The more detailed examination of some of the teaching methods reported in this chapter led to the development of a new curriculum model which I intended to put into practice in Kuwait. This model drew chiefly on the work of Erickson (1993), Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001).

Specifically, it adopted: Chapman's broad aims and objectives for art education as they relate to cultural learning and the study of the art heritage and art in society. It was influenced also by her ideas and also those of other art educators to select traditional cultural artefacts as the content of my art curriculum. It applied Erickson's enquiry method of teaching art history through student-led investigations and the questioning of specific examples of art and was influenced by her goal of using art-historical enquiry as a means to better understand culture in everyday life (p.148). The model as developed included the instructional strategies also of visits to a museum and involved students in observing authentic artefacts closely and meeting local artists (craftworkers). Finally the model incorporated Hickman's ideas about learning through making and included art making as well as historical and cultural learning. It made use of sketchbooks as a tool for students to research and collect information about their artistic heritage and record their responses and ideas about art works visually and verbally.

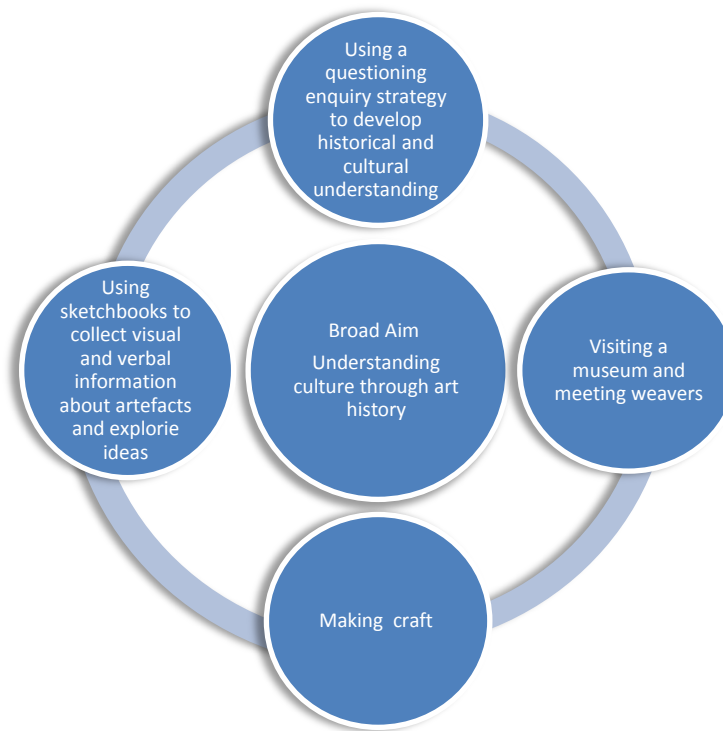


Diagram 2: Art Curriculum Model for Teaching Art History and Cultural Heritage in Kuwait.

At the end of the review of the literature, I concluded that the most important reason for teaching art history in schools and the basis of its value for my own research was that it had the potential to help children to understand their own culture. Subsequently, I determined that the proposed research would use the particular case of *Alsadu* weaving to test out ways to introduce historical and cultural learning into the art curriculum in Kuwaiti primary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the research strategy that I decided to employ for the study as a whole. I made my decision about the methodology after defining the problem, formulating the research questions and investigating the literature mentioned in the preceding chapters. This chapter describes in some detail the action research method, the overall approach to the design of the research and the methods of data collection and analysis. In the first section I present the research questions again and show how they were refined, following the literature review; then I discuss the methodology of action research and the way in which it influenced the research design. Next, I present the methods of data collection and analysis. Finally, I discuss the ethical considerations that affected this study.

3.1 Research questions

The initial research questions formulated at the very beginning of the study were as follows:

1. How can the theory and practice of art history and cultural education be introduced into the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait?
2. How can a traditional women's craft be taught in a way that demonstrates its relevance to students' life today?

3. What kind of teaching and learning strategies and resources will enable me to achieve to achieve my overall aim?
4. What kind of research method is appropriate for a study that focuses on curriculum change?

The design of the research project evolved through different stages, and small changes were made throughout the study. After the review of the literature the research questions were reformulated to make them more specific in curriculum terms and in order to assist the curriculum design, as follows:

1. How can the theory and practice of art history and cultural education in Western countries be introduced into the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait?
2. How can the traditional women's craft of *Alsadu* be taught in such a way that it demonstrates its relevance to students' lives today?
3. Will using a questioning/enquiry instructional strategy and a sketchbook to study artefacts, together with a museum visit and collaboration with an artist achieve the learning objectives and my overall aim?
4. Is action research an appropriate way of trying to change the art curriculum in Kuwait?

3.2. Why action research?

At the beginning of the research, I reviewed the literature about research methods to find a suitable one. During the review I found that Bassey (1995, p. 6) distinguishes between three broad categories of research: (i) *Theoretical* research, in which people describe,

interpret and explain events without making any judgments about them; (ii) *Evaluative* research, in which they describe, interpret and explain events so that they or others can to make evaluative judgments about them; and (iii) *Action* research, in which they describe, interpret and explain events while looking to change them for the better.

Action research has been defined as a mixture of the terms ‘action’ and ‘research’.

The German social psychologist, Kurt Lewin (1946), who was the first person to systematise this method, identified it as a kind of “comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action” (p.34). John Elliott, who is well-known internationally for his role in developing the theory and practice of action research in the contexts of curriculum and teacher development, defined it broadly as ‘the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it’ (1991, p.69). The following comment by Griffiths and Davis (1993) encapsulates my own view of its most significant characteristics:

Action Research is not trying to identify large-scale causal laws. Instead it focuses on the rigorous examination of a single situation, using knowledge drawn from experience and research findings to illuminate it, in order to improve it (p. 45).

One of the admirable features of the action research method is that it involves research into practice, carried out by practitioners in authentic learning situations. As a teacher who wanted to conduct research in primary schools in Kuwait, I found these ideas attractive. The practical problem that I had identified was the neglect of cultural and historical learning in the design of the National Art Curriculum (for primary schools) in Kuwait. I knew that I wanted to design an experimental curriculum intended to help students understand their national cultural heritage, one which used traditional artefacts as a means to achieve this aim. I wanted also to test the curriculum out in schools to determine whether or not it solved this problem.

3.2.1. Characteristics of action research

Action research has distinctive characteristics. In '*A Teacher's Guide to Classroom Research*' (1985), Hopkins, quoting Kemmis (1983), describes it as follows:

Action Research is a form of self-reflected enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of those practices and (c) the situation in which these practices were carried out. It is most rationally empowering when undertaken by participants collaboratively, though it is often undertaken by individuals and sometimes in co-operation with 'outsiders'. In education, Action Research has been employed in school based curriculum development, professional development, school based improvement programmes and systems planning and policy development (p. 32).

Griffiths and Davis (1993) summarise the main characteristics of the method as follows:

'Action Research'... is usefully distinguished from a range of other kinds of social science research by its emphasis on action. It is different from 'positivist' research, which uses the physical sciences as a model. Action Research is not trying to identify large-scale causal laws. Instead it focuses on the rigorous examination of a single situation, using knowledge drawn from experience and research findings to illuminate it, in order to improve it (p. 45).

Another important characteristic of action research is collaboration. Zuber-Skerritt (1992) also uses the terms 'action-research within the classroom' and 'action learning,' describing the latter as:

... a process by which groups of people... work on real issues or problems, carrying real responsibility in real conditions. The solutions they come up with may require changes to be made in the organisation and they often pose challenges to senior management, but the benefits are great because people actually own their own problems and their own solutions (p. 48).

For Kemmis and McTaggart (1988: 5), "The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realise that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members." Winter's (1996) main point about collaboration is that everyone's views are taken as a contribution to

understanding the situation. Elliott (1991) also encourages collaboration among the teachers involved in action research, because it offers them the possibility of forming a collective, felt understanding which can strengthen their practice. The present research took the form of the close examination of a practical problem and resembled what Cohen and Manion (1994) call a “small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world” in collaboration with teachers (p. 186).

One difference, however, between the plan of action that I developed for this action research and most of the examples I read about was that my first two cycles of action were not collaborative. Because the aim of the first cycle was to identify theories and methods in the international literature that could be adapted to the Kuwaiti art education system and because I was a research student studying in England, I carried it out myself. In the second action cycle I carried out research into a traditional form of weaving in Kuwait and designed a curriculum unit by myself, because I knew that the art teachers in Kuwait would have very little experience of curriculum design and because the aims, content and strategies that I wanted to test were drawn from designs discovered in the literature.

As a practising teacher, I was sympathetic to the idea that educational research should embrace the notion of the ‘teacher as researcher’ who works in collaboration with other teachers to test out and implement a curriculum and then analyses and evaluates it with them. According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), in action research the researchers should “merge their separate identity and collaborate with teachers in a common effort to resolve educational problems and improve educational practices” (p. 127).

In the remaining cycles of the action research I decided to collaborate with three art teachers, a professional weaver and an art education expert who agreed to participate as a consultant. The intention was to invite feedback from him about my proposed curriculum unit. When the curriculum was tested out I collaborated with an expert practitioner in the

craft selected as the focus of the study and later worked with the three teachers to implement, evaluate and then modify it. As the researcher, I collaborated with the teachers so as to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum model and to establish whether or not it was possible to introduce it into the Kuwaiti system.

One important characteristics of action research, according to Elliott (1991), is the spiral or cyclical character of the overall research design. Researchers set up a series of self-reflecting cycles of action, each of which embodies a four-stage process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. He advises that the planning should be flexible enough to allow for changes in the direction of the research between cycles, and to provide the basis for continual progress. In his influential book *A Practical Guide to Action Research* (1993), Elliott sets out in detail the four main steps that researchers should follow in an action research project. In the first, they identify a general idea, which usually refers to a state of affairs or practical situation that needs to change or be improved. In the second, they make a reconnaissance of the literature in order to better describe and probe the facts of the situation and construct a general plan of action. In the third, they implement the plan; and evaluate the results. The steps follow one another in order. Typically the plan is put into action more than once and is modified and revised again and again.

In the present research, when the curriculum I designed was implemented in schools. I followed Elliott's advice (1994) that evaluation should be directed towards three important areas: the curriculum itself, the teaching involved and the outcomes that ensued (p.179). According to Elliott (2002), teaching without evaluation is a blind enterprise; it is like trying to teach a group which you cannot see or hear. In such circumstances, modifying the results on the basis of feedback alone would be impossible. Thus, in work

on the curriculum both teaching and evaluation interpenetrate and are integral to the whole (p.150).

I also learned from reviewing the relevant literature that reflective thinking is a crucial aspect of action research and that reflection on processes and activities is essential for the development of educational practice in general (Dewey 1933; Loughran, 1996). The concept was unfamiliar to me at the start of the research, so I had to consider it carefully. In 1996, Loughran, outlining the work of Dewey (1933) and Goodman (1984), defined reflection as ‘the deliberate and purposeful act of thinking which centres on ways of responding to problem situations’ (p. 14). For Elliott (1991), reflective practice is important because it enables researchers to enhance their understanding of the practical value of the action research. He goes so far as to suggest (1991) that the process of reflection is representative of the action research process as a whole. He is especially interested in the role played by reflection in the professional development of teachers. When practitioners pursue action research in a reflective way, he claims, it enables them to overcome obstacles to improved practice and become producers of knowledge. In his discussion of the steps or stages in action research, Elliott (1991), following Lewin (1952), refers to a ‘self-reflective spiral of cycles’, in which ‘action initiates reflection’ (p. 23). He understands that the purpose of undertaking reflection during these cycles, as always, is to improve the quality of the action under review.

In 1995, Susi explained that reflection in action research involves looking back on experience as a way of re-examining what has happened in order to better understand it. Somekh (1995), among others, confirms that reflection is at the core of this research method. Each action research cycle follows a process of action, observation and reflection, leading to greater understanding, which is repeated by more action and reflection. In this research, I wanted the members of an action research team to help me

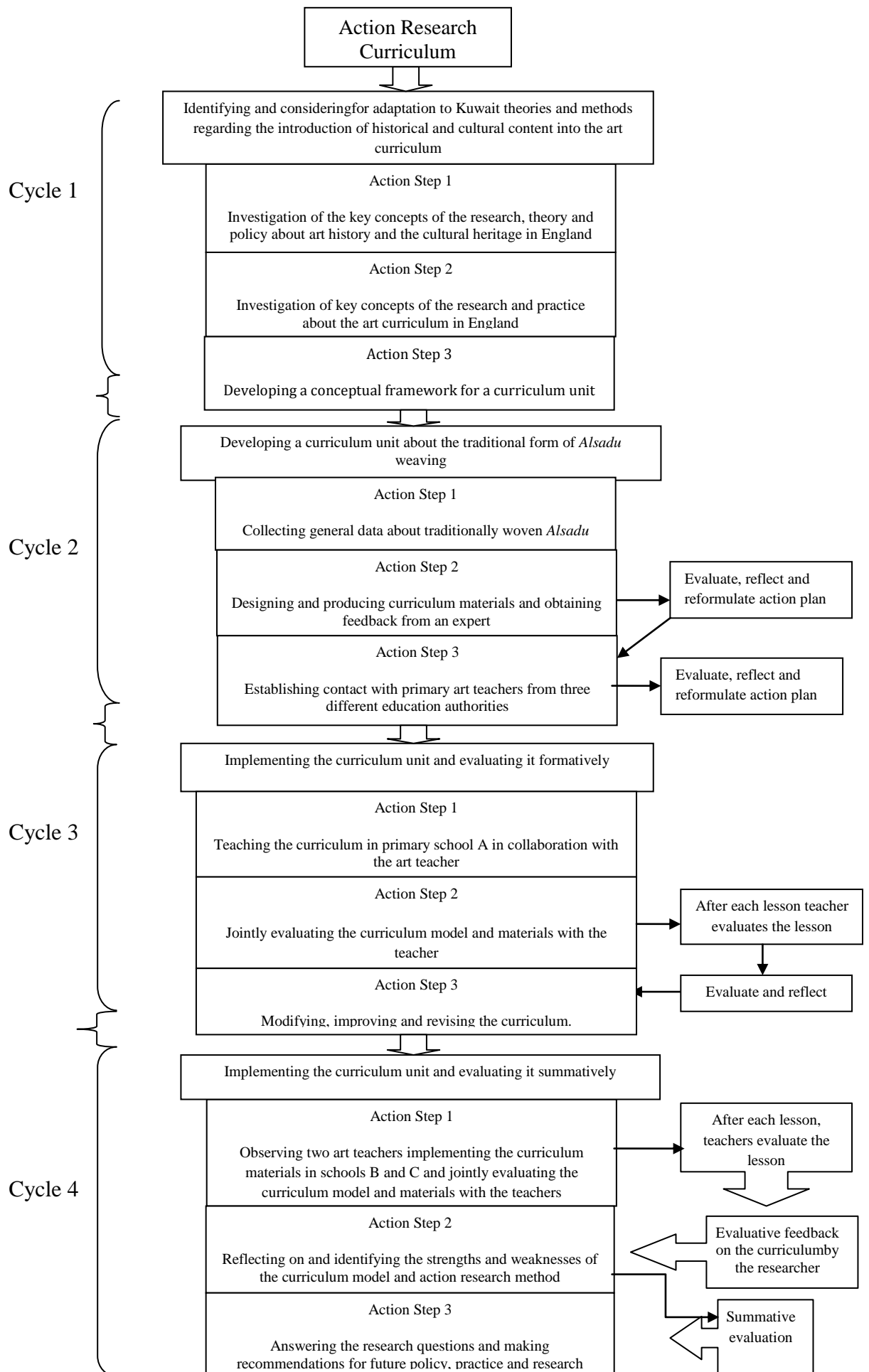
develop the curriculum unit, by participating in a process of critical self-reflection, evaluation and group discussion in the way that Parsons and Brown (2002) describe.

3.3. The plan of action

As noted previously, I decided to follow John Elliott's (1991) practical guidelines for testing the curriculum unit out in practice and evaluating it. I adopted the action research method as a broad approach for carrying out the research as a whole, but drew on Elliott's ideas in particular to develop, design and evaluate the new curriculum.

The stages in the research were as follows: (i) researching art education theory, policy and practice in England; (ii) researching the content (*Alsadu* artefacts) and designing the experimental curriculum; (iii) testing and formatively evaluating the curriculum in one school and revising and modifying aspects of the design; and (iv) testing the revised curriculum again in two schools and evaluating it summatively, before answering the research questions and making some recommendations for future developments and practice.

The action research plan adapted from Elliott is shown below.



3.4. The Design of the Research

3.4.1. Details of the action plan

The plan of action, therefore, had four main cycles: researching art education theory, policy and practice in England; developing a curriculum; implementing and evaluating the curriculum formatively and implementing and evaluating the curriculum summatively. This section describes in more detail the process of the action research and gives details of the participants, data collection instruments used outside and inside the classroom and the method of data analysis.

Research process

Cycles	Action steps	Methods of Data Collection	Participants	Time Frame
Cycle One: Identify and consider for adaptation to Kuwait theories and methods regarding the introduction of historical and cultural content into the art curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study theory in the specialist literature about teaching art history and culture.• Read and analyse the English National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 for Art and Design.• Observe museum education sessions in National Gallery and the British Museum.• Observe one primary teacher in a London school.• Interview one primary teacher in London.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Researcher's field notes.• Tape-recordings of interviews.• Checklist for classroom observations.• Checklist for observation in museums.• Semi-structured interview questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One teacher in London.	October 2009- November 2010

<p>Cycle Two:</p> <p>Develop a curriculum unit about a traditional form of <i>Alsadu</i> weaving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse documents about traditional weaving in Kuwait at the <i>Alsadu House Museum</i> in Kuwait. Photograph examples of traditional weaving at this museum and weavers. Interview four professional weavers at the museum. Design the curriculum unit (six lessons). Get feedback on the written plans from expert in Kuwait. Establish contact with primary art teachers from three different education authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos. Field notes. Tape-recordings of interviews. Semi-structured interview questions. Researcher's reflections on the data collection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Professional weavers. Expert in art education in Kuwait. 	<p>December 2010-August 2011</p>
<p>Cycle Three:</p> <p>Implement the curriculum unit and evaluate it formatively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach the curriculum unit (six lessons) myself in one primary school (A), and collaborate with a weaver. Evaluate the results for each lesson and the whole curriculum unit with a teacher observer. Modify, improve and revise the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field notes made by the researcher after lessons. Observation checklist from teacher. Students' question-answer sheets. Students' sketchbooks. Students' artworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researcher. One art teacher. 17 Year Five students in school A. One weaver. 	<p>September 2011-January 2012</p>

	curriculum.			
<p>Cycle Four:</p> <p>Implement the curriculum unit and evaluate it summatively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and lead two professional development workshops for the two teachers before they implemented the curriculum unit. • Observe the two art teachers implementing the lessons with their Year Five students in schools B and C. • Evaluate the results for each lesson and the curriculum model as a whole with the teachers. • Reflect on and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum model and action research method. • Answer the research questions and make recommendations for future policy, practice and research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes made as a non-participant observer. • Question-answer sheets for students. • Students' sketchbooks. • Students' artworks. • Checklists and observation notes completed by the teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two art teachers in schools B and C. • 25 Year Five students in school B. • 32 Year Five students in school C. • One weaver. 	<p>January 2012-December, 2012</p>

Cycle 1: Researching Art Education theory, policy and practice in England

In this cycle, policy and practice were studied and analysed as they related to learning art history and culture, in particular to the instructional strategies of using sketchbooks, museum visits and artists' visits to primary schools. The main aim was to identify and consider theories and methods which could be adapted to the Kuwaiti art education system. Specifically, at this stage of the research I carried out the following steps (actions).

1. I studied theories in the specialist literature about teaching art history and the use of sketchbooks. This material was sourced from such specialist journals as the *International Journal of Art and Design Education*, *International Journal of Education through Art*, *Art Education* and *Studies in Art Education*. I also consulted art history journals such as the *Oxford Art Journal*, *Art History Journal of the Association of Art History*, *AAH Bulletin*, *Getty Education* and *The Burlington Magazine*. In addition, I searched research databases and websites, such as www.gca.org.uk, www.nsead.org and www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications. These were visited to learn about the main international theories and methods in art education.
2. I read and analysed the English National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 for Art and Design, the teacher guidelines produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other UK government documents about cultural learning, such as the report *All Our Futures* (1999). The purpose of analysing these policy documents was to help me select the most appropriate curriculum aims and content to adapt for Kuwait.
3. I visited a class in a primary school in London on 15 October 2010. I had originally planned to visit four or more primary schools to find out how teachers

used sketchbooks and taught art history and culture, but received permission to visit only this one. I was a non-participant observer for one art lesson, collected primary data about what was going on in it and took field-notes. I developed a checklist in advance for use during observations (see Appendix A). I conducted a semi-structured interview with the same teacher after observing his lesson. I had developed ten open ended questions, in the hope that this would allow teachers to lead the specifics of our discussions (Minichiello, Fulton and Sullivan, 1999). They were based on the research questions and included more general questions about the teacher's perceptions of the art curricula and art teaching in general (see Appendix B). I sought permission to tape-record this interview, transcribed it and analysed the data to determine its recurring themes. Unfortunately the number of observations and interviews was too small to facilitate the curriculum design.

4. I visited the education departments of selected museums and galleries in London, the National Gallery and the British Museum, in the periods 24/11/2009-21/6/2010; 29/10/2010-10/5/2011 and 12/5/2011, to study their programmes and for two to three hours observe educational sessions with students of primary school age. My focus during these visits was to find how the museum collections were being used for teaching art history and observe the activities organised by the museum educators in collaboration with the schools. During my visits, I used a checklist (Appendix C), while observing the students and noted in my diary their concerns and the dialogue between them and the gallery educators.

Cycle 2: Developing the curriculum

The aim of this cycle was to develop a curriculum unit focusing on the traditional form of weaving called *Alsadu*. To begin with, I researched the tradition and the way that it is

practised today and interviewed four professional weavers. Then I designed and wrote a curriculum unit consisting of six lessons. Specifically, during this cycle the following action steps were taken:

1. In January 2011, I collected and analysed documents about traditional weaving in Kuwait, held at the *Alsadu House Museum* in Kuwait city. The museum website www.alsadu.org.kw, its reference library and a digital database contained information about the country's rich textile and weaving traditions. It offered a programme of educational courses and workshops, run by practising weavers and art instructors in the traditional techniques of nomadic weaving, dyeing, some other textile arts and in design. I took photographs of examples of traditional weaving at the museum and of the weavers and participants as they learned how to weave, dye and design textiles.
2. I interviewed four professional weavers to learn their life stories; I interviewed two on 18 January 2011 at *Alsadu House Museum* and the other two in 25 January 2011 at their homes. Each interview took one hour. I developed twelve open-ended questions (see Appendix D) for the interviews and asked them when they had started weaving, whether they understood it as work or a hobby, what materials they used and where these came from. I also asked them whether the general public was interested in learning this textile art.
3. I designed a draft of a curriculum unit capable of connecting local and national customs and artistic traditions. I tried to ensure that the lesson plans were suited to the age group and physical capacity of students in Year Five and complied with school security and safety regulations.
4. The curriculum unit was submitted to an expert on 10 August 2011, before it was implemented in schools. A Professor of Art Education at the College of Basic

Education in Kuwait scrutinized the written materials and approved them without the need to make any changes. He confirmed that the unit was ready for application in schools.

5. I selected primary teachers from three different local education authorities in Kuwait to help me trial the lessons. I met all the teachers together on 15 April 2011 for two hours at Al Safir Hotel, before they tried out the lesson plans and materials. At this meeting, I discussed and explained the research informally, including the learning objectives and teaching strategies and methodology. A letter describing the study as a whole, its development and methods of evaluating and disseminating the results was sent to their schools, to encourage the teachers to participate (see Appendix K).

Cycle 3: Implement and evaluating the curriculum unit formatively

All the action steps in this cycle took place at a primary school in *Alasemah* Education authority (School A). The other participants were the regular art teacher, who had 12 years' teaching experience, 17 Year 5 students aged 10-11 and the professional weaver.

The plan of action was as follows:

1. To teach the curriculum unit myself, for six weeks, exactly according to the lesson plans in the curriculum unit. It was implemented this first time with an art class in school A. As I taught each lesson, the art teacher observed and filled in an observation checklist that I had designed so that I could capture her evaluative feedback.
2. The data collected in this cycle included my lesson plans, the students' artworks, teacher's checklists, the observation notes completed by her during each lesson

and the completed pre- and post-test question and answer sheets. Details of each of these instruments and the methods of data collection are given below:

- i. The observation checklist (Appendix A) was designed to gather the teacher's feedback about the lessons and was used for the purpose of evaluating the curriculum model and materials. She was asked to write comments on the strengths and weaknesses of each lesson. The checklist was in the form of a table with a list of points and spaces for the teacher to write notes about the lesson preparation, objectives, content, teaching strategies and mode of delivery, organisation of content/timing, resources (images, books, museums, etc.), and evaluation of student learning. She was also asked to evaluate the instructions for the lesson and mention any changes needed to the lesson plan.
 - ii. The students' artworks, their sketchbooks, *Alsadu* weaving, completed museum worksheets and my notes about their discussion of the *Alsadu* artefacts were collected and studied. I checked their sketchbooks after each lesson, looked at what they had written and sketched and checked their weaving to see if they had learned the skills and understood the processes. I wrote notes about what they had said, discussed their questions and answers and assessed how they were learning through talking and discussion. I checked the answers to the 14 questions on the worksheets that they completed at the museum in Lesson two, to see what information they had collected and how much, and what they had discovered for themselves about Kuwait's Bedouin heritage.
3. All the different kinds of data collected in the implementation cycles of the research were analysed and used for the purposes of evaluation. After each lesson I sat for 30 minutes with the teacher in the classroom and listened to and

discussed her oral feedback and notes and looked at the students' artwork with her, and we evaluated the lesson plans in the curriculum unit. Later the same day, I wrote notes on my laptop about what had happened in the lesson and during the evaluation with the teacher and considered the points that she had made. I also checked the students' sketchbooks and studied their written work and sketches again to find how they had benefited from the lesson. After Lessons four and five, I looked at their weaving to see how well they had learned the *Alsadu* techniques, I studied all the notes I had written during the lesson and subsequent discussion with the teacher, before writing my own evaluation and reflection.

4. Before and after I implemented the lessons for the whole unit, the students completed the pre-/and post-test question and answer sheet consisting of fifteen questions (Appendix E). These questionnaire responses helped me to assess how far the students had benefited from the set of six lessons.
5. Following the analysis of all these data, I modified and improved the curriculum materials and finalised the design of the unit.

Cycle 4: Implementing and evaluating the curriculum materials unit summatively

The aim of this last cycle was to implement the revised curriculum unit again and evaluate it summatively so as to reach some conclusions about its strengths and weaknesses and answer the research questions.

This cycle took place in school B in *Alahmadi* authority and school C in *Alfarwaniya* authority. This cycle of the research was carried out in collaboration with the professional weaver, and two art teachers, who had the same amount of teaching experience (10 years). It included 25 Year Five students at school B, all of whom except four were Kuwaiti; and 32 Kuwaiti students in Year Five at school C. In this cycle, the teachers

taught the lessons in the plan and the weaver played the roles of artist in residence and museum educator.

The steps that I took to coordinate the research in this cycle were as follows:

1. I organised two professional development workshops for the teachers before they implemented the curriculum unit. The first one took place at school C on 15 January 2012. The focus was on explaining the teachers' role in the action research and introducing the curriculum unit. Two weeks later, I distributed to them written copies of the revised lesson plans in the curriculum unit together with all the relevant materials and resources. These consisted of some *Alsadu* images, a copy of a booklet about *Alsadu*, some sketchbooks, the film, worksheets for use in the museum and the teacher's evaluation form. I asked them to go through the materials and to prepare a list of questions or comments for me. The second workshop took place in School B, on 28 February 2012. In this one, the teachers had a chance to discuss the curriculum unit and any difficulties that they anticipated after reading it.
2. On 6 and 7 March, the teachers taught the lessons to their regular classes in their own schools. I attended all the lessons as a participant observer and recorded what I saw and heard. I chose not to intervene in order to see what happened when I let someone else teach the unit. I used the same checklist as in the previous cycle and made observation notes during the lessons. I also provided both teachers with evaluation sheets to complete after their lessons (Appendix I).
3. After each lesson, I sat down with the teacher concerned to discuss successes and failures and listen to her comments. Together we evaluated the students' work in their sketchbooks, in the museum worksheet (for Lesson two), their weaving and

in the questions that they raised. Later, I followed the same procedure after each lesson and in the joint evaluations as in the previous cycle.

4. At the end of the sixth lesson of the unit, I handed out the questionnaire again (Appendix J), after making some minor improvements to the design of the questions and finalizing it in its new form.
5. After analysing all these data, I reflected on them again at length in the light of the theories in the literature. Then I wrote the summative findings about the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum model and the action research method. This enabled me to answer the research questions and make recommendations for future policy, practice and research at the end of the study.

3.4.2. Details of the data collection instruments

The action research method adopted in this study was qualitative. This section describes in more detail the main data collection tools used in the empirical part of the research. These were (i) semi-structured interviews, (ii) the tools used for museum and classroom observations and evaluations, (iii) the researcher's diary and (iv) photographs. In this research, a pre-test/post-test questionnaire was used also to look for changes and improvements in student learning after the implementation of the curriculum unit.

3.4.2.1. Interviews

Interviews were used to collect the data in cycles one and two. The interviewees included an art teacher in a primary school in the UK (in Cycle one) and four professional weavers working at *Alsadu* House Museum (in Cycle two). In each case the questions were semi-

structured, so as to give greater flexibility and freedom of responses. As noted previously, the sample of teachers in the UK schools was inadequate. The approach I took to interviewing also was qualitative. Warren (2001) defines the purpose of most qualitative interviewing as being to derive interpretations, not facts or laws, from respondents' talk. According to him (2001), "Qualitative interviewing is a kind of guided conversation in which the researcher carefully listens '*so as to hear the meaning*' of what is being conveyed" (p.85). I understood it as a form of conversation, in which researchers ask questions and listen to respondents' answers for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information (Cannell and Kahn 1968).

According to Cunningham (1983) and Patton (2001), interviews are an important part of any action research project because they give researchers a chance to continue the investigation in order to solve problems and collect data which cannot be obtained in other ways. I chose to design semi-structured interviews and developed a carefully worked out schedule of questions so as to allow latitude for the interviewees. As Wragg (1981) says:

A semi-structured interview schedule tends to be the one most favoured by educational researchers as it allows respondents to express themselves at some length, but offers enough shape to prevent aimless rambling (p185).

I followed Minichiello, Fulton and Sullivan's guidelines (1999) and wrote nine open questions for interviews with the teachers in UK schools. Later I developed a different series of twelve open questions for the interviews with the weavers. I chose open questions because they give respondents a chance to choose what they want to talk about within the topics set by the questions.

As Patton's guide (2002) to interviewing points out, the first step involves the researcher before interviewing begins in outlining a set of issues to be explored with the respondents (p. 342). I wrote down key interview questions in advance so as to ensure that all the relevant areas were covered. I realised that asking questions and then simultaneously listening and observing the interviewees and taking notes would be difficult. Hence, I sought permission to tape record what they were saying in order to concentrate better upon other aspects of their responses (Burton and Bartlett, 2005). All the interviews, even the ones that were like informal conversations, were taped, thus enhancing the effectiveness and accuracy of the data. The interviews began by setting up the tape recorder during a friendly greeting and the creation of a specific social context for conversation. I opened each interview session by stating my name, followed by the date for the record, tried to listen carefully to the respondent's answers and make sure that I said nothing until they had finished speaking. Immediately following each session, I downloaded the interview from the digital recorder to my computer. I listened to the conversation and noted down for the next session any missing information or questions that had not been covered. All the interviews were coded and saved in the same folder.

i. Interview in the UK

The interview questions for teachers in the UK were general ones based on the research questions but included some more specific ones about the respondents' perceptions of art curricula and art teaching (see Appendix B), generated by the literature review. I planned to interview eight teachers, but received permission, as noted above, to interview only one. I prepared a set of nine questions, either general or more specific, to elicit the interviewees' opinions about art curricula. The set of general questions was aimed at obtaining their ideas and experience of art curricula and of art teaching in general. The

data that I eventually obtained were important for the present research, because they resulted in a substantial body of knowledge about teaching art and history, which were useful for curriculum development. The other questions were designed specifically to find out how UK teachers taught art history and to learn about the source materials used in their art lessons. I developed nine specific questions, together with a fact sheet covering such descriptors as the respondents in this research project, the objectives of the interview, what I wanted to find out and why it seemed important.

ii. Interviews in Kuwait

The interviews with the weavers were conducted in Arabic. The questions included in these interviews (see Appendix D) were aimed at learning more about the tradition of *Alsadu* weaving, the weaver's role in society, what the tradition involves, its aesthetic, function and production and the weavers' techniques and materials. I intended to include these findings in the curriculum unit.

As far as possible, I transcribed the tapes immediately so as not to forget anything. I did not edit or alter the tapes and transcribed them in full, using the original grammar, and including repeated words, pauses and responses (Saldana with Wright, 1996). As a general rule, after transcribing a recording I listened to the tapes again to make sure I had made a correct transcription. Patton (1990) and Easton, McComish and Greenberg (2000) recommend rechecking so as to overcome transcription errors and keep up a high degree of accuracy in the transcription process.

3.4.3. Observations in Schools and Museums

A second important data collection instrument in this study was observation, which took different forms in the various cycles and involved both the teacher team and myself. As Cohen *et al* (2007) indicate, observation is a way to “gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations” (p. 396) and its advantage as a data collection instrument is that it offers researchers the chance to gather live data from natural social events. As Robson (2002) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), point out, what people do is often different from what they say they do and observation provides a reality check because researchers have to determine what the evidence in front of them actually is. Participant observation has been called the fundamental basis of all research methods, on the grounds that researchers cannot study the world without being part of it (Adler and Adler 1994). According to Patton (1990), collecting observational data allows researchers to enter into and understand the situation they are investigating. In this study I made observation a central research tool, in the hope that this would lead to awareness of what was happening on the site, rather than of relying on what people said was happening (Robson, 2002).

In this I was influenced by Patton’s claim (2002) that direct observation benefits researchers in four main ways: (i) it gives them a better understanding of the context in which people interact; (ii) they gain direct experience of the object of study and do not need to rely on conceptualisation in advance; (iii) they have a chance to see things that are usually part of the daily routine and can escape notice; (iv) it offers them a chance, during interpretation and analysis, to learn something that people may be unwilling to mention and a more comprehensive understanding of the situation in question, based on personal knowledge.

Lofland (1971) suggests that there are six main types of information that can be elicited from participant observation: information about acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships and settings. I considered all of them when I observed in London and Kuwait. As a researcher, I observed and looked at real things happening before my eyes and recorded and wrote down information about or photographed what I saw. Before I started observing, I decided what kinds of behaviour or discussions I wanted to focus on. Specifically, I focused on the interaction between the teacher and students, the students' behaviour and the work they produced in class, and most of all on how they used sketchbooks.

The observations took place mainly in classrooms in Kuwait during the implementation of the curriculum experiment, but they also took place in England before the curriculum was designed in a school and in museums. In Cycle one in the UK I observed for three hours each one art lesson in a UK primary school and five education sessions at museums and galleries, so as to learn how the collections were being used and how museums collaborate with schools. In Kuwait, one art teacher observed me teaching the lessons in the curriculum unit in Cycle three and then I observed two other art teachers teaching the unit in Cycle four.

I developed two checklists for use during observations in London and Kuwait. Each checklist consisted of a sheet of paper with sets of written prompts for the observer to fill in. In constructing them I followed Elliott's advice (1991) that I should use an open design. The first checklist (Appendix C) was designed for me to use in the Education Departments of the National Gallery and the British Museum in London, and to help me discover how the museum collections were being used for teaching art history and to observe the activities organised by the museum educators in collaboration with school teachers. The second checklist (Appendix A) was designed for use in schools both in

London and Kuwait to gather information about the lessons. I used it first when I observed a lesson in a school in the UK; then it was used in schools in Kuwait by the teacher team and me to record what had happened in the experimental lessons and help the action team to evaluate the curriculum model and materials.

3.4.3.1. Photographs

Prosser (1998) takes an important step in promoting the use of image-based research. I was influenced by his view that imagery, whether it is in the form of a photo, picture or graffiti, adds much to research data. I used the camera occasionally as a data collection tool when the curriculum unit was implemented in Kuwaiti schools, to photograph students' artworks, body language and gestures and collect evidence of the teaching methods used.

Photographs add to the data that a researcher collects during observation. In this research, I used photographs to help me record visual data such as the students' artworks and because I was interested in Prosser's suggestion (1998) that photographs provide additional information which augments other forms of data and thus help to answer research questions.

I obtained permission to photograph from the participants beforehand. I kept a digital camera with me during all the school visits and at *Alsadu* museum where I used it to capture the *Alsadu* artefacts and weavers at work. During the lessons in schools I photographed the artwork and the students when they were drawing in their sketchbooks, playing the information game, making presentations in class, weaving *Alsadu* and joining in discussions in small groups and in class.

3.4.3.2. Researcher diary

My researcher diary was a very important data collection tool throughout this research. Following the advice of Bloor and Wood (2006, p 82), I created what they call a “research diary” in Arabic and English and used it for many purposes and as a constant aid. I used the diary as a sort of research tool to record both my ideas about the literature and observations relating to all parts of the research (see Appendix K). Gibson and Brown (2009) understand “the research diary ... as a basic reflexive resource that helps researchers to think and work through the many issues that are encountered in research” (195). They see the diary as an important source of information which the researcher should use for reflection and to document the chronology of the research project and the order in which things happen.

In this research I used my diary to make field notes whenever I observed something in action as well as to store other forms of data, such as interview transcripts. The diary played a key role, therefore, in both collecting and analysing data in the present research. I used it also to organise the action and record facts, for example, to keep a time table of events; for making notes about ideas in the literature I read; to draw things such as *Alsadu* patterns; to record verbatim words used in discussions that took place both inside and outside lessons and informal and formal meetings and also to record my own impressions and ideas about the research and data as they were collected. I wrote down in it my feelings about what was happening and used it to reflect on and analyse the data and come to conclusions.

There is a sense in which the research diary was the most important methodological tool in this research, and entries were made in it in every cycle. I kept the diary with me at all times, ready to write notes about what I had observed, heard or was thinking about, and my own evaluations of the curriculum materials and lessons. During each lesson

observation I made notes about what I saw beside the checklist; and soon afterwards, I wrote down more comments about what had happened in class, the students' sketchbooks and artworks and the meetings with the teachers. I also made notes about students' answers to questions and about any changes needed to the curriculum materials.

3.4.3.3. Pre-test/post-test questionnaires

In addition to the qualitative methods of collecting data described above, I developed a structured questionnaire for gathering data from the participant students in Kuwait. The purpose of implementing the pre-test post-test questionnaire was to gain precise evidence of their attitudes to including art history in the art curriculum before and after they had experienced the curriculum unit and to establish if these had changed. I administered it in the form of a pre-test and post-test twice in each school, once before and once after implementing the curriculum unit, in Cycles three and four. In this instance, I followed Taylor's advice that structured questions get more certain answers. The questionnaire, which was designed in the form of a worksheet, comprised ten questions to assess the extent of their knowledge of art and culture in Kuwait, before and after learning about them in art lessons, using exactly the same wording both times. The first pre-test post-test questionnaire, used in Cycle three included ten questions, and the revised one used in Cycle four had fourteen, focusing on/enquiring into the Kuwaiti culture and heritage, and art teaching and learning strategies.

In Cycle three, I submitted the questionnaire twice to the participating students before and after teaching the lessons myself. After I analysed these data, however, I realised that they found the questions difficult to understand. In Cycle four, in the two schools where the implementation took place, the procedure was the same but the questions were simpler.

3.4.4. Data analysis

According to Merriam, (1998), data analysis is the “process of making sense and meaning from the data that constitute the finding of the study” (p. 178). In this research the analysis of the data mainly took the form of educational evaluation. I followed the advice of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) that analysing data on the basis of the research questions is a very useful way of organising it, because it draws together all the relevant data for the issues of concern for the researcher and preserves the coherence of the material (p.468). I used these issues to inform the analysis of the data, in every cycle and this helped me at the end to collate all the relevant findings from the research into themes and reflect on them in an attempt to answer each research question. Throughout the research, however, I realised I needed to pay attention to unexpected issues and questions as they appeared in the data. I tried to be flexible and respond to any challenges to my thinking; for example, I changed my intention from ‘teaching art history’ to ‘teaching the art heritage’. Another example was when I realised the weaver was playing a very important and unexpected role as a museum educator; by doing this she compensated for the lack of information in the museum and made a very important contribution to the success of the curriculum experiments that I had not expected.

I used many data collection tools. Each one had a specific question to help me to focus on what I was looking for and help me find answers to the research questions. At different stages in the research I developed different sub questions for each main research question: for instance, in Cycle one I asked “How is art history and culture taught in UK schools?”... “How do teachers use sketchbooks and teach art history and culture?”... “How are museum collections being used for art history teaching in the UK museums?” “How do museum educators collaborate with schools in the UK?” In the second cycle, I used question such as “What are *Alsadu* artefacts?”... “What materials are they made of

and where did these come from?”. In the third and fourth cycles I asked questions such as “What did the teachers like or dislike in the curriculum unit?” and “What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the curriculum unit?”

I organised, analysed and evaluated the data from each cycle in turn, combining the findings together for a final reflection and evaluation and to answer the research questions at the end. After I had evaluated each lesson and the unit as a whole with the teachers in each cycle, I evaluated the model and materials by myself. This meant that I could decide if the research design, the curriculum model or the teacher materials (or any combination of these) needed to be changed during the research process.

Specific details of the method of data analysis in the cycles are outlined below.

In Cycle one, I analysed data in the form of ideas in the literature to identify and consider theories and methods which could be implemented in the Kuwaiti art education system. In this cycle the data sources were Western and Arabic books and journals, and the notes that I made about them in my research diary, my completed observation checklists from the school and museums in the UK and the interview transcripts and my notes about the interview with the teacher. I analysed all these data and drew some conclusions about which theories and methods to include in the art curriculum that I went on to design for use in primary schools in Kuwait.

The data from the research into *Alsadu* in Kuwait in the first part of Cycle two consisted of my notes and photographs of *Alsadu* artefacts collected from reading books about the craft and studying and photographing examples at the museum, together with the transcripts and notes from my interviews with four weavers. In the second part of the cycle, when I designed the curriculum materials and created the lessons, I used all these data together with my notes about curriculum development and the information about

instructional strategies in Western countries that I had collected in the previous cycle. All these data, including the findings from the research into *Alsadu* were consulted and analysed many times so as to help me design the curriculum unit and write the materials for teachers.

The data collected about the curriculum experiments in Cycles three and four and the methods of analysis were similar. In Cycle three I used diverse data, including notes in my diary, students' work (their sketchbooks' and artworks), museum worksheets, pre-test and post- test questions, photographs, the teacher observation checklists and my written evaluation notes. In this cycle I evaluated the curriculum with the teachers after each implementation and recorded the results in my dairy. I used the findings to improve the lessons with the teachers, kept a record of what the teachers had said at the evaluation meetings, used the students' evidence of team work, used the teachers' evaluation checklists, and used the questionnaire evaluation. I referred to my lessons to help me think about the course of the research.

In Cycle four, I collected the same kind of data as in the previous cycle, but added a teacher evaluation lesson checklist. I followed the same procedures as in Cycle three, but in this cycle there were two levels of data analysis. In both cycles the descriptive and evaluative data collected by the teachers and meduring and following the lessons were used for the purposes of formative educational evaluation so as to determine at a practical level how the materials and lessons needed to be altered and improved. However, a second action step took place in Cycle four also; this which was more theoretical and reflective and resulted in a summative evaluation of the unit and final conclusions about the strengths and weaknesses of the research as a whole.

In the final step in this cycle, therefore, I also added another level in my reflection and started to think about the research as a whole, added a theoretical dimension and

identified the strengths and the weaknesses. When I reflected in this cycle, I began to bring all the data from every cycle together and this enabled me to reach a final conclusion about the strengths and the weaknesses of the curriculum unit as a whole.

Asking myself questions in the second action step in Cycle four helped me to analyse and allocate to significant themes all the data collected during the research. After having analysed all the data and reflected on it before coming to any conclusions about the curriculum model and the research questions, a summative evaluation of the curriculum model and unit was made at the end of the reflection process.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

The research followed the Roehampton University Ethical Guidelines for Research, Practice and Teaching (2012). In this section, I refer to the general ethical issues that these guidelines raise about using human participants, anonymity, and the specific procedures that I applied.

3.5.1. Using human participants

These guidelines state that researchers should send letters to schools requesting permission to visit and conduct research. In the research in the UK, a letter requesting permission to study was sent to more than ten schools in South West London in October 2010. It stated that the purpose of my proposed visit was to observe art lessons and teachers' use of sketchbooks. In the research in Kuwait, a letter was sent in advance (April 2011) to the head teachers of the three primary schools where the curriculum unit was tried out; these letters outlined the study as a whole, the curriculum and its aims, how it would be implemented and the method of evaluating the results; then I requested

permission for the teachers and students to participate in the action research. Two more letters were sent in advance to the teachers (Appendix L) and the students' parents (Appendix N), requesting their agreement to let their daughters participate in the proposed research. In each case the recipients were asked to sign a consent form.

I gave all the students consent forms for their parents to sign. Most of them came back. The students who did not bring the form back gave me their parents' mobile numbers, which I later called and received permission. I tried to be as systematic as I could about securing permission but following these kinds of ethical procedures is unusual in Kuwait. I expected to face some refusals from the teachers, who were not familiar with teacher-based research and might think that I had come to evaluate them or want to add to their workload. I was prepared to counter these reactions and assure them that my intention was to evaluate the experimental curriculum, not their teaching. I asked the school administration to reduce the teachers' course schedules so that they could participate more fully.

3.5.2. Anonymity

The participants' anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, before I collaborated with them. The adults all gave me their informed consent to participate themselves or allow their children to take part, and were promised anonymity and confidentiality. I also obtained permission from the parents to take photographs of their children in lessons; since some of those included in this thesis show their faces, they could be identified. Hence, as the University of Roehampton Ethics Guidelines require, the data about human participants were stored safely in my house throughout the research and could not be seen by anyone except me. On reflection I think these ethical procedures were essential for the

collaboration to work well. The parents of the participating students and teachers all needed this reassurance before they agreed to collaborate freely with me.

CHAPTER FOUR: DESIGNING THE CURRICULUM MATERIALS

4.0. Introduction

The review of international literature had disclosed curriculum models and methods of teaching art history and cultural heritage which were formalised in Western countries. In this chapter, I describe how I used this new knowledge to design a curriculum unit and produce some curriculum materials for teachers of Year Five students in Kuwait. First of all, I describe how I arrived at a working definition of *curriculum* development. Then I report the findings of some research that I carried out into the content of my curriculum (*Alsadu* weaving), before discussing details of the construction of the curriculum materials.

4.1. Researching curriculum development

Because I had no previous experience of curriculum design, I had to look at the literature on curriculum development to form some idea of how to begin. In Kuwait, teachers do not design their own curricula; they receive ready-made ones from the Ministry of Education. I soon realised that curriculum development is a complex activity and I needed to learn new skills. The Western experts in this field whom I consulted, including Stenhouse (1975), Cornbleth, (1990) and Grundy (1987), all agree that it starts by identifying a body of knowledge to be transferred and a set of core concepts to be learned; and that expectations and goals have to be identified and specified in advance.

Developing a curriculum also involves the mediation of cultural knowledge, the communication of ideas and the choice of teaching strategies and planning activities and resources. I had already decided on the curriculum content (*Alsadu* weaving), but since the aim of the present study was to introduce art historical and cultural learning into art

lessons in Kuwaiti schools, it was necessary to identify the main concepts in these two fields that would permeate this new curriculum, together with relevant teaching strategies and resources.

First, a definition of *curriculum* also had to be arrived at before I could finalise the aims. Blenkin *et al* (1992, p.23) understand this term to refer to knowledge which is transmitted or ‘delivered’ to students by the most effective methods. Elliott (1984) states that in its operational meaning, curriculum is “what transpires in classrooms as a series of events that are intentionally educational” (p.259). Burgess and Gee (2007) define it simply as “a plan or framework for that which is taught and/or learned” and state that “pupils gain access to it through the ways they are taught and the conditions in which they learn” (p. 69). According to them, the curriculum in its broadest sense includes all the effects, conscious and unconscious, that impinge on student learning. But they point out that learning never happens in a vacuum; the spirit of a school and its rules, regulations and common values, and the beliefs and individual interests of all the teachers are always part of the curriculum. After considering all these ideas, I decided to adopt Elliott’s definition and approach the curriculum as a series of events in classrooms which complement each other so as to achieve some stated aims.

Some of the literature that I consulted at this point in the research focused on curriculum plans or materials. According to Elliott (1984), a curriculum “is often conceived as a set of plans or materials” (p.259) and “much of what is meant by curriculum development is referenced to the activities of developing such materials” But, he warned, “such plans and materials represent the intended curriculum, as contrasted with the operational curriculum” (p.259). In this research, I adopted this idea from Elliott and I designed and produced some new curriculum materials for teachers intended to help them to communicate the cultural heritage of *Alsadu* in their lessons in a fruitful way.

For Grundy (1987), too, a curriculum is not merely a set of plans produced by a designer (one person alone) ready to be put into practice by someone else; it is formed through an active collaborative process of planning, acting and evaluating, the steps of which are all relevant to the exchanges and integration inherent in the process. But, to develop a curriculum, the designer should first look for, or devise, a good plan and develops it with a team of designers. In Knight's view (2001), a good curriculum is one which plans "for learning to take place through communities of practice in which group work and peer evaluation are normal, interpersonal contact is common and networks of engagement are extensive" (p. 377).

According to Marsh (1997), *developing a curriculum* simply refers to different steps in curriculum planning, design and production and, in addition, is associated with the completion of a particular set of materials. However, Schwab (1960) contests this idea, finding it inflexible and liable to neglect the important relationship between teachers and their students. Schwab's view is that, in every school, new curricula should be developed by the work of a curriculum committee consisting of teachers, who take into account the practical constraints and concerns of the whole school community. He insists that the idea of the teacher as a 'reasoning person' should play a major role in determining the curriculum. Stenhouse (1980) also believes that ideas in the form of a hypothetical curriculum should always be tested by teachers in the classroom. I agree with them that teachers strongly influence what happens to a curriculum once it reaches the classroom. Hence I involved teachers in testing out and evaluating my planned curriculum.

Elliott (1994), who, as noted in the last chapter, is a prominent expert in action research, understands curriculum development as "the process of transforming images and aspirations about education into programs that will effectively realize the visions that initiated the process" (p. 126). Writing about action research and curriculum

development, MacDonald (1978) agrees that curriculum definitions have gradually moved towards the idea of working together with such a purpose. For him, curriculum development is a study of what form the world should take and how people should go about creating it. His definition highlights the need for curriculum development to focus on the improvement of social relations within a given society.

In the previous chapter, I reported that I had decided to use a collaborative action research method. But I had to design the curriculum materials by myself because the participant teachers, who, like me, also had no experience of the task, lacked the necessary expertise. However, they did help me to test out the curriculum model twice and to evaluate it. The next section of the chapter reports on the first step in the curriculum design and planning process, namely, researching *Alsadu* crafts.

4.2. Researching the curriculum content

Before I designed the curriculum unit, I spent two months in Kuwait collecting information about *Alsadu* artefacts and researching the historical cultural tradition of *Alsadu* weaving. I analysed documents and exhibits at the *Alsadu House Museum*, read six books and some articles about this craft and interviewed four professional weavers to learn about their life stories. Such research was essential because this cultural tradition had never been documented in a way that was suitable for teaching about it in schools.

While I was researching *Alsadu* at the museum I discovered how few remaining weavers there were in Kuwait. So I decided to interview four of them in order to strengthen my own understanding of this craft and its role in Kuwaiti society. It was important to find out as much as possible about *Alsadu* weaving (its aesthetics, mode of production, materials and the techniques of weaving, spinning and dyeing) and the history of this

tradition (its meaning and function in society and changes and continuity in its production over time) before it disappeared. I intended to include this background/contextual information in the new unit, in the form of teachers' notes to supplement the lesson plans.

I interviewed four professional weavers: Um Terqi, Um Barqush, Um Hemoud and Metera, on January 18 and 25, 2011. I met two of them in the *Alsadu House Museum* and two in their own homes. With their permission, I tape-recorded the interviews. One weaver initially refused to allow this, but when I promised her that no one else would hear the recording, she agreed. But, to my surprise, she had no objections to my taking photographs of her as she was weaving in the workshop (Figure 1). I made notes during her interviews and recorded the discussions in the other three.



Figure 1: Weaver teaching participants in a workshop at *Alsadu House Museum*.

4.2.1. Findings about Alsadu crafts

The findings about *Alsadu* crafts were an important part of the content of the curriculum. I located some written information about the traditional *Alsadu* Bedouin craft in Kuwait, but the books did not supply all that I needed to learn about how this craft was practised and some of my questions were left unanswered.

For this reason, the information in this section is written mainly as if it had occurred in a story told by the weavers. It draws mainly on the information (which from an academic perspective I acknowledge may not, be factually accurate or complete) that they gave me when they answered my questions, drawing on their personal experience or on knowledge handed down to them from other weavers. Most of the weavers' stories are compatible with the academic accounts in books.

I reported the findings in this way also in the hope that teachers would find the narrative approach interesting when I included its content in the curriculum unit.

i. Women weavers in Kuwait

From the reading and interviews I learned that there are not many women weavers in Kuwait today and that the ones who worked in the *Alsadu House Museum* were all in their sixties or seventies. These weavers told me that they had learned their craft from relatives, such as grandmothers, mothers and aunts, or else from neighbours, if it was difficult to learn the techniques of weaving, spinning and dyeing within the family. I realised that the advanced age of all the known weavers in Kuwait meant that the transfer of *Alsadu* craft skills from generation to generation has come to a standstill; if this continues, *Alsadu* weaving will in time disappear.

The weavers said that they started to learn how to weave at around 12 years old, from watching and helping adult women spin, dye and weave. As young girls, their main work was to help the women thread the wool on the loom. By the age of sixteen, they could weave and reproduce almost all the traditional *Alsadu* patterns, except for intricate designs such as the *Shajarah*, which need great skill. (As Um Turki remarked, "this is a lengthy and elaborate design, over 40-50 yards long or more"). At twenty, girls were

considered old enough to start weaving *Alsadu* pieces alone. In the past, skilled weavers used to be accorded great respect and praise and were described as *dhefra*, meaning ‘victorious’. Once every girl learned *Alsadu* weaving techniques and weaving was one of the main occupations of Bedouin women living in the desert. But it was only one of many craft skills that they practised there.

ii. Purposes and functions

Historically, weavers wove for their family’s sake, because they had no other way to supply their domestic needs; they created objects such as outer panels for tents and bags for storage. The main purpose of weaving was connected with shelter, primarily in the form of tents. According to Hilden (2010) and research by the Royal Scottish Museum (1985), the Bedouin wove most of the things needed for everyday life, including the tents they lived in and other items, such as rugs, saddlebags (*alkhuruuj*), gear for camels and horses (*safayef*) and storage bags (*mazawed*), used to hold household and personal items, including cookware, food and clothes (*qati*). They wove tent dividers to give privacy within the tent, blankets and cushion covers. The tent was called *bait al sha’r* (‘house of hair’) and, like the rest, was woven from hand-spun yarns made of fibres from their own herds. Um Barqush (one of the weavers) mentioned that “cushions were only made later, once cars appeared in the desert, because the early users needed to travel light, with few belongings”. Crichton’s book (1989) confirms this when it reports that: “cushions were only made after cars and trucks appeared in the desert of Kuwait in the early 1950’s because they were too heavy to carry on the backs of camels” (p.11).

In the past, the most important aspect of the production of *Alsadu* was that it satisfied the family’s practical needs. Women wove the things needed by their families and themselves

for personal use. Today all the materials needed to weave *Alsadu* can easily be found in markets, ready to use, even though most women have stopped practising the craft.

Nowadays, there is no need to weave some items according to this craft, but some women still weave things for the home or to sell in the markets, and adapt their skills to make products for modern demands (Hildren, 2010). But, according to the weavers, *Alsadu* weaving has become a hobby or a way of earning extra money. Most professional weavers weave only on demand; and undertake commissions coming mostly from *Alsadu House Museum* or schools which use *Alsadu* for decorative purposes or as part of traditional style Kuwaiti furnishings.

iii. Traditional and contemporary materials

In the past, the Bedouin used every resource to hand. They wove fabrics from the animals which formed the basis of their livelihood. Women spun sheep's wool from the sheared fleeces. They did not purchase sheep and camels' wool, but used the fleeces of animals they already owned. Metera (one of the weavers) told me "sheep's wool was their most common fibre" and that "it comes in many natural colours and is the easiest to spin, dye and weave". She said that goat hair, which is the strongest material, is best for tents and is occasionally used with other fibres that, when very tightly spun, are quite strong. The weavers told me that goats' wool was used for tents because the black colour absorbs heat; when it gets wet the yarn swells, tightening the woven structure and because of this and its natural oils, it resists the rain. In addition, it is hard-wearing and does not stretch. Traditionally, camel, goat and cotton yarns were used in their natural colours and never dyed. Some kinds of wool or lint do not need to be dyed as they are already coloured red, black, white or beige (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Natural wool.

The wool used for dyeing is always white. In the past, weavers used natural dyes of red, orange, blue and green; however, only a limited range of colours was available (Crichton, 1989). The weavers told me that the dyes came from desert flowers and plants, such as madder (*Fewa*), turmeric (*kurkum*), pomegranate (*Romman*) and a wild plant (*Argoon*), which yields yellow and orange, while madder and henna provide red (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Natural dyes.

Al Sabah's (2001) book confirms this: "As for the red dye, most women did their own dyeing and used alum, dried lemon and madder as a mordant to hold the colour" (p.40).

According to the weavers, if the women could not find a certain dye, they could borrow it from a neighbour without payment or they could buy ready-dyed yarn from the markets at Hassa, Zubair and Riyadh.

The weavers used *al Girn*, a gazelle horn which was usually about 15 cm long, for complex designs, such as *Uwarjan* and *Shajarah*. The spindle they used, called a *Meghzal*, was simply a thin stick with a whorl and hook attached to one end. According to Um Turki, "the spinners made the *Meghzal* themselves out of twigs and tree branches, from, for example, *Alsader*, *Algadhae* and tamarisk, at a time when there was no iron or glue. They made them without nails or adhesives and used dates to stick the wood and piece of fabric together". Using only natural products made life very simple. According to Metera, "if someone did not know how to make a spindle (*Meghzal*), she could ask her neighbours to give her one or teach her to make one without charge". I take this as evidence of the dignity and generosity of the Bedouin people. Traditional *Alsadu* materials and tools are still in use today and can now be bought from markets. Weavers also buy chemical dyes there, imported from India. They told me that they are quick and easy to use, but unfortunately not fast. Although they have become common, the quality of the colours is inferior to those used in the past. The colours of a piece of *Alsadu* from 50-60 years ago are still bright. Although the same wool is being used today, the quality is not as good; and the same is the case with the chemical dyes, which can be bought in various colours, and even the spindles. Um Hemoud told me that "in the past only a small amount of dye was used to get a colour that was strong and stable, but now we put in a large amount of chemical dye and still do not get the colour we want". Um Turki said, "Unfortunately the quality of the materials had declined".

iv. Ethnic identity

According to the UK researcher, Crichton (1989), ethnic identity determined by the tribe influenced the nature and finish of *Alsadu* weaving. One of the weavers explained that some tribal fabrics are thick and others are fine; and the tribes use different patterns and designs. Although women from the Hanbali tribe weave a wide variety of patterns, they never weave the *Shajarah* (tree pattern); but other tribes – the southern tribes in particular – often weave tree designs. Knowledgeable people can trace a weaver's identity from her work. According to Um Turqi, "the tribes of *Mutair* and *Awazim* weave the neatest and smoothest *sadu*, while the other tribes have more typical but almost identical kinds of weaving". Some people, she said, believe that each woman's identity and her skills and family influences can be seen in her weaving. Um Terqi told me "the tribes of the north, such as the *Alhnblyat*, *Aljmillat* and *Albathalyiat*, who weave large *Ragum* patterns, are renowned for their skill, which is ranked the best among the *Alsadu*". Other tribes weave the great tree pattern, *Shajarah*, in black and white and put smaller designs inside it. All the traditional patterns and motifs in Bedouin weaving have names and many have a particular meaning and symbolism. Metera told me, "The northern tribes favour *Ragum* (triangle shapes) more than the Bedouin from the south. In many of their rugs they also use an all-over pattern created out of triangular shapes known as *bsat hanbali*."

A *wasm* is the mark of the ancient tribe, or the brand which nomads used to distinguish their own camels and cattle. According to Metera, "some weavers included their *wasm* as a pattern in their weaving". For collectors of woven textiles, the site of origin and the provenance are the primary concern.

I learned from the weavers that large numbers of Bedouin people today travel in search of trade and exchange, ideas and technology. While the weaving techniques and tools of

the various tribes are similar, as are the textiles themselves, the colours and patterns differ between regions and from tribe to tribe.

In Bedouin tribal society in the Gulf Region, now called Kuwait, weaving was restricted to women. The weavers whom I interviewed told me that it would have brought shame to a man to do women's work and it was not in a Bedouin man's nature; if he had done so, tribal members would not have married his daughters or sisters, or allowed their sisters or daughters to marry him. Men had their own work, herding the sheep and camels as they wandered. While they did this, women spent their time supplying their husband's domestic needs.

v. Patterns, colours and designs

In the past, weavers worked on traditional patterns, such as *Dhurus el-khail* (horses' teeth), *Midhkhar* (the warehouse), *Hubub* (grain foods such as legumes), *Dallaha* (ribs of sand dunes and/or human ribs), *Aein* (the eye), *Uwairjan* (monotheism, the one God), *Shajarah* (tree) and others (see Figure 4).



Figure 4: *Alsadu* patterns.

The *Shajarah* pattern is a very complicated one which incorporates triangles, diamonds, camels, snakes, earrings, the human form, zig-zag lines, combs, squares and scorpions (Crichton, 1989) (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: *Shajarah* patterns.

Um Hemoud said, “*Alsadu* patterns like this depend on the weavers’ art and skill”. She told me that they sometimes used to draw a pattern in the sand first and then weave it. Weavers today still copy patterns passed down from generation to generation, which depend on tribal memory.

Metera said that, in the past, “weavers had no problem weaving human and animal figures in their *sadu*, but over time, they realised that it was forbidden (*haram*) in Islam for religious reasons”. Because the principles of Islam forbid the representation of the human form in weaving, as elsewhere, they restricted their representational forms to non-living items, including combs, scissors and earrings. As time passed, the weavers added new designs, such as the forms of Arabic calligraphy, incense burners, aircraft and water towers (Al Sabah, 2001).

Traditionally, they used only a few colours, because the dyers were restricted to what nature could supply (madder, henna, *Lummi* [dry lemon], pomegranate and *Argoon*), yielding such colours as red, yellow, orange, white, black and beige. Present-day weavers tend to prefer the artificial colours created by industrial processes, because they are more varied and easier to procure and prepare. Indeed, not every weaver these days knows how to prepare natural materials. The chemical colours which they now use resemble natural ones, but are not of the same quality (Crichton, 1989). Um Barqush observed that “the quality of the fabric is in decline, too, because many weavers have shifted from using the natural fibres to the readily available synthetics, because they are easy to use”. Hilden’s book (2010) confirms this: “many women prefer the easier route of buying synthetic yarn to spinning sheep wool, goat or camel hair” (2010, p.11).

Today weavers tend to weave simple straight forward patterns, which are based on the traditional ones, but many people think they do not attain the same quality, beauty or mastery. Um Turki told me “the previous generation surpasses the current generation, for then everyone took the production of everything they needed into their own hands”.

vi. Social significance and meaning

I learned that in the past *Alsadu* weaving had had great social significance and creative designs were much appreciated. Bedouin tribes and families celebrated women whose spinning and weaving was fine, accurate, imaginative and strong. The most skilled weavers (*dhefra*) were especially valued for producing objects that their families wanted to use in their daily lives. According to Metera, “husbands were proud of their wives’ skills in creating the furnishings for the men’s section, called *almajlis*”.

The years following the discovery of oil in the 1930s saw a dramatic change in the lifestyle of people living in Kuwait, many of whom had been nomads before they began to settle in urban areas. The consequent breakdown of traditions has led to a reduction in craft practice. According to Hilden (2010) “Some items are no longer needed and materials may be scarce. They can be bought more easily than made by hand” (p.11).

It is evident that the cultural and social environment of weaving has changed in Kuwait, together with changes in people’s priorities. *Alsadu* has lost its high social status and foreigners nowadays are more attracted to it than Kuwaitis. One reason, according to Um Turki, is “the availability of *Alsadu* from other countries, such as Syria, Turkey and Pakistan, where it costs less”. Moreover, people in Kuwait today covet Western and modern furnishings and very few women are working in corners or by the sides of their houses to carry on the *Alsadu* heritage and traditions. Moreover, not many people use

Alsadu in their homes; and only those with limited means still produce it. There is no longer any general demand for it in Kuwait.

vii. Influence of geography and environment

The geographical and physical environment of the places where the tribes lived influenced most aspects of *Alsadu* weaving. The fabrics, designs and colours varied in different regions, due to the nature of the available materials and because the shapes and colours were drawn from nature. This is why the weaving from the north differs from that in the south (Hildren, 2010). According to the weaver called Metera, the tribes which lived inland used red, orange, black and white, since these were the only colours at their disposal. She told me that trade in the past was limited to coastal areas and it was difficult for tribes living far away to travel to the coast where dyes from Al Hassa (an area in Saudi Arabia) and India could be bought. This explains why some tribes used fewer colours than others.

Bedouin weavers had to know how to use the roots, leaves and branches of all the desert plants for spinning, weaving and dyeing (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985). In reaction to the austerity of the desert, Bedouin women enlivened their drab surroundings by using bright colours, such as reds and oranges, from natural dyes. But their designs and decorative patterns also reflected the austerity of the desert. Their woven tents of black goats' hair, or sheep or camel wool could easily be dismantled and moved across the desert during the rainy winter months and then moved back towards the wells in the summer months as they searched for pastures. The harsh desert itself was a simple dwelling place for the Bedouin, who were supported by their herds (Crichton, 1989).

The summer used to be the season for weaving and the beginning of the summer was the time when the animal fleeces were shorn. According to Crichton, (1989), “In warm weather, the coat begins to ‘rise’ and falls off in matted lumps of hair and wool mixed” (p.18). As summer approached, Bedouin women in their tribal settlements began the process of weaving on horizontal looms, which were easily assembled and dismantled to fit the nomadic lifestyle. Women who migrated and settled among the Bedouin were more likely to weave outdoors in the fresh air in summer, when they became stressed by the dry conditions indoors. Moreover, people often considered the winters too cold for activities such as weaving. Temperatures in the desert vary greatly from region to region and month to month. In winter they can range from a balmy 70° or 80° degrees to 0°Fahrenheit, which is not conducive to weaving; instead the women waited for the long summer months when the tribe settled down (Crichton, 1989).

4.3. The Curriculum Materials

Designing the curriculum materials was a very big part of this research project and required a great deal of work and thought.

In Chapters One and Two, I reported that art history can be taught in schools in many ways and the literature indicates that a number of different assumptions and methods can be adopted when including it in a general school curriculum. After examining some teaching methods in detail and researching *Alsadu*, I developed a model and suitable teaching materials for a new curriculum to try out in Kuwait. As noted previously, the aims and instructional strategies for the lessons included in the curriculum unit drew chiefly on the work of Erickson (1993), Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001). For example, I used Chapman’s aims and objectives for cultural learning and for studying the artistic heritage and the role of art in society; and she also influenced my choice of

traditional cultural artefacts (*Alsadu*) as content. The curriculum unit applied Erickson's enquiry method of teaching art history through student-led investigations; and also Chapman's strategies of visiting museums and galleries, meeting local artists (craftworkers) and involving students in closely observing authentic artefacts in museums. Finally, it was influenced by Hickman's ideas to include art making as well as historical and cultural learning and to encourage the use of sketchbooks as a tool for students to record their research into their artistic heritage.

At the beginning of this stage of the research, after I had learned something of the craft of *Alsadu* and Kuwait's cultural heritage, I studied the objectives in the Kuwaiti national curriculum and tried to construct objectives for my own curriculum unit to link with these. Fitting the objectives and content together was a particularly difficult part of the design task and took me two months because I was working alone. After this, I studied instructional strategies again in the international literature in art education, and then wrote six detailed lesson plans. Writing the curriculum materials and producing them in the form of an illustrated booklet for teachers took around six months overall.

Description of the curriculum materials

The curriculum materials that I developed consisted of 73 pages and some illustrations. They included an introduction which presented the new ideas to teachers in full and set out the aims, content and strategies. The introduction listed the government's broad art education objectives and my own objectives for the primary curriculum in Kuwait and provided information about the teacher's responsibilities for delivering the unit. It included the six lesson plans and some teacher guidelines to help teachers deliver the content and strategies, since they were new to Kuwait. The last section contained a

glossary of Bedouin and weaving terms, together with some coloured images of *Alsadu* artefacts and a list of materials. At the end of the unit, I inserted a list of references.

The curriculum materials were implemented and evaluated twice. After the first implementation, I revised and modified certain aspects of them and after the second, I finalised the design. I used the collective experience of a team of three teachers to help me evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson plans as a way of preparing the unit for future dissemination.

In the following more detailed account of designing the curriculum unit and materials, I describe how I linked my broad and specific objectives for the curriculum to the aims for primary art education in Kuwait and defined the teacher's responsibilities, as I saw them. I discuss how I devised the format and content of the lesson plans and adapted the instructional strategies from the international literature

4. 3. 1. Objectives

When I studied the 26 broad educational aims for the national curriculum in art in Kuwait, I found some that were especially relevant. One of these, for example, was "to link students to their natural and social environment ... using local materials to create works by hand" (Ministry of Education, 1990/1989, p. 13). The Ministry guidelines and policy document for art teaching actually mentioned the importance of giving all students the chance to explore and research artefacts and encouraging them to investigate local artworks when visiting museums and galleries. They also stated that art teachers should seek to encourage personal growth in students' thinking, perception, initiatives and questioning, so as to help them become active members of their society. Another aim was that they should seek to increase students' awareness of the Arabic arts and artistic heritage, by

investigating examples of them and expanding their specialist art vocabulary so as to discuss them.

The curriculum unit and materials which I designed sought to further these aims, because they focused on encouraging students to learn about their artistic and cultural heritage and provided opportunities for them to explore, research and study traditional craft techniques, as well as experiment with new ways of using them. But some of the learning objectives that I formulated, such as seeking to encourage self-learning and studying the role of art in society, were not among the Ministry's aims. And, although visits to museums and galleries were acknowledged in the government documents, no art teachers in my experience had put this recommendation into practice.

The general and specific learning objectives, as stated in the curriculum materials that I developed, were as follows:

4.3.1.1. Broad learning objectives

Students will:

1. learn how to observe, analyse and describe artefacts from different places and times and understand their function, design and significance.
2. use a sketchbook effectively for the purposes of historical and cultural learning and for investigating, recording and documenting the artistic qualities of artefacts.
3. understand the basic characteristics of the Bedouin art of weaving.
4. ensure the continuity of their cultural heritage by making crafts and using them for new functions.

4.3.1.2. Specific objectives

Students will:

1. investigate and acquire knowledge about *Alsadu* weaving.
2. acquire a specialist vocabulary for this weaving.
3. learn how to thread a loom and other practical skills, techniques and processes of *Alsadu* weaving, such as flat weave stripes and *Al Dallaha*
4. use this knowledge to develop ideas for their own artwork.

4.3.1.3. Teachers' responsibilities

When I specified the teacher's responsibilities in the curriculum materials, I was influenced by Schwab's idea (1960) of the teacher as a 'reasoning person' who plays a major role in determining his/her curriculum. I specified the teachers' responsibilities in order to help them understand how to teach the unit. Their responsibilities when they did so centred on four kinds of learning activity: helping children to (i) respond to artworks, (ii) make art works (iii) investigate art; and (iv) providing them with relevant historical information for cultural learning. All these learning activities were influenced by the ideas of Erickson (1993), Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001) and were elaborated on in the Introduction to the curriculum unit in the form presented below.

i. Responding to art

1. The teacher should give all the students a sketchbook and encourage them to make full use of it at all times to collect information about Kuwaiti culture and *Alsadu* crafts, by making notes and sketches and recording things visually and

verbally. In practice, this will involve them in the close observation of local artworks and making annotated sketches.

2. The teacher should guide students in the practice of looking and should help them to respond, discuss, observe closely and describe.
3. The teacher should introduce students to *Alsadu* craft processes in a way that develops their sensitivity to and appreciation of their beauty, good taste and workmanship.
4. The teacher should help students to make decisions about the formal and symbolic character of their own artwork.
5. The teacher should encourage students to develop a vocabulary to describe objects which they have closely observed and to appreciate genuine artefacts as well as motivating them to discuss and describe their designs.

ii. Making art

The teacher should

1. give students opportunities to take personal responsibility for making artworks as they learn about traditional weaving and culture, and respond creatively by designing their own woven artefacts
2. help students to develop design ideas for their own artefacts through making sketches, diagrams and plans, and thinking about their function and use.
3. help students to apply their craft skills in creating new designs and artefacts using the information and drawings which they have collected in their sketchbooks.
4. motivate students to appreciate traditional social life.
5. encourage students to play an active role in maintaining the continuity of Kuwait's cultural heritage by making *Alsadu* crafts.

iii. Investigating art

The teacher should:

1. take students to visit the *Alsadu House Museum*, to study the collection there and look at, study and discuss the craft of *Alsadu* weaving.
2. give students a chance to meet a local craftworker (an *Alsadu* weaver) in the classroom and/or at the museum, who can talk about her experience, artistic production and life.
3. require students to study artefacts and crafts closely and help them develop their descriptive abilities and sharpen their observation.
4. encourage students to investigate their cultural heritage by themselves, so as to better understand their culture.

iv. Historical and cultural learning

Alsadu designs should be considered from the standpoint of their subject matter, function, symbols and patterns of meaning, the history and traditions, the weavers' experience and the role of this craft in Kuwaiti society past and present.

The teacher should:

1. encourage students to explore and understand Kuwaiti culture.
2. motivate students to acquire historical information about art and life in Kuwait and understand and appreciate it.
3. help students to acquire cultural knowledge through studying traditional artefacts.
4. increase students' knowledge about women and their crafts in Kuwaiti culture.

4.3.2. Content of the curriculum unit

The curriculum content pertaining to *Alsadu* craft constituted a new area of art historical content which I hoped would help Year Five students to gain some understanding of Kuwait's heritage and culture.

When I analysed the findings of my research into *Alsadu* weaving in Kuwait, I realised that all the points reported in the first part of this chapter ought to be included in the curriculum materials, since together they open up an important aspect of the national culture. I anticipated that studying *Alsadu* artefacts would give Kuwaiti students a chance to learn about their national cultural heritage. As well as investigating some artistic and formal elements of *Alsadu* crafts, I had also researched historical and cultural data about them and the social context in which they were made and used. I hoped that participating in the curriculum experiments would encourage some students to pick up enough practical knowledge of the craft to continue practising it and thus preserve the tradition.

The six lessons that I designed for the unit all focused on aspects of *Alsadu* weaving. I wanted the teachers to use the information included in the introduction and lessons to transmit to the children important aspects of the cultural context of this craft tradition. I included in one lesson a visit to *Alsadu House Museum* so that the children could see actual examples of this traditional craft and study them there. The lessons also included collaboration with a weaver in which she taught them simple beginners' skills in weaving, for instance, how to make traditional *Shah* and *AlDallaha* patterns. In the last two lessons the students were asked to decorate contemporary artefacts with *Alsadu* designs.

The first five lessons focused on the tradition of *Alsadu* weaving and included art history which is a missing dimension of the curriculum at present in Kuwaiti schools. I wanted to use authentic *Alsadu* weaving as content because it exemplifies the cultural heritage of women in particular; and I wanted to help female students in Kuwait to understand

women's culture. It was important for them to investigate *Alsadu* designs, their subject matter, patterns of meaning, history and symbolism, and to learn about the weavers and their role in Kuwaiti society in different historical periods. The lessons in this curriculum unit featured authentic *Alsadu* artefacts, held in a collection at a museum where students were expected to examine and investigate them closely. The teaching/learning activities were designed so as to enrich the students' understanding of these traditional artefacts, acquaint them with the weavers' life experiences, feelings and stories of the weaving tradition in the past and increase their awareness of the Bedouin environment.

I included contextual information about *Alsadu* in the lessons so as to strengthen their identification with their culture, national customs and artistic traditions. In addition, I wanted the students to learn a few traditional weaving skills, before these disappeared.

The first lesson, called "Understanding the lifestyle of the desert", focused on Bedouin society and culture and used a documentary film as an educational resource. The aims of the lesson were to help the students appreciate crafts and their importance for their makers and users, together with the desert and its relevance for Kuwaiti people in the past. The film told them about the desert and its environmental impact on people's lives. In this lesson, students discovered how people in Kuwait used natural objects and the materials around them. They also learned how to distinguish natural objects from some of the objects that desert people created in the distant past.

Lesson two was entitled "Investigating and documenting artefacts in the museum". The aims were to help students to explore and investigate authentic examples of *Alsadu* weaving, examine their function, design and significance and acquire knowledge about the people and culture. In this lesson, the students study examples of authentic *Alsadu* crafts and learn about their meaning, design and function and what makes the crafts of the desert people useful and distinctive, by drawing artefacts and discussing with their teacher

and the weaver what they have explored. The students are directed to use sketchbooks to record what they have found out and to analyse *Alsadu* patterns. Their research is used as a basis for group and class discussions about specific artefacts. The teacher is meant to encourage them to talk about the effects of such limited resources on the lives of the Bedouin people, as reflected in their use of simple, light craft materials to make their travelling as easy as possible. Finally, they learn that each piece of *Alsadu* weaving has its own meaning and function.

Lesson three was entitled “Talking about and presenting artefacts”. The aims were to help students extend their vocabulary by talking about authentic examples of *Alsadu*. In this lesson, the students increase their understanding and appreciation of their culture by being given the chance and means to reflect on a traditional women’s craft. They are required to describe, analyse and interpret crafts from the past, thereby developing a technical vocabulary for weaving in general and *Alsadu* crafts in particular. Finally, they are expected to attend to and respect each other’s opinions when sharing ideas about *Alsadu* artefacts with their classmates and the teacher.

Lesson four was entitled “Meeting a weaver and starting to weave”. In this lesson students learn from an authentic crafts person about her craft. The aim of this is to raise students’ awareness of their artistic heritage and the role of crafts in their society, by increasing their knowledge of the basic characteristics of weaving, as a traditional women’s craft. Students learn about Kuwaiti culture and the history of *Alsadu* crafts, about women’s roles in traditional Kuwaiti society and about craft materials. They are taught to use these traditional materials and the basic skills of weaving on a simple loom. When they reflect on what they have learned in this lesson, it is anticipated they will begin to value art historical knowledge as a way of coming to know another time and place.

Lesson five was entitled “Weaving *Alsadu* patterns”. The aims were to help students understand some basic processes of the traditional art of *Alsadu* weaving and develop the requisite practical skills. They learnt at first hand some of the design motifs used in *Alsadu* what distinguishes each pattern and how to weave the *Al Dallaha* pattern. They also learn the specialist vocabulary associated with *Alsadu* woven patterns, such as *Dhurus el-khail*, *Midhkhar*, *Hubub*, *Dhalla*, *Aein*, *Uwairjan*, *Dallaha* and *Shajara*; and how *Alsadu* weaving patterns were influenced by the desert and Bedouin culture. It is anticipated that this will lead them to appreciate these designs, colours and patterns and how hard it is to combine them.

Lesson six was entitled “Creating artworks based on the theme of Kuwaiti cultural heritage”. The aims were to create artefacts based on their cultural heritage and help students discover that traditional Kuwaiti society valued *Alsadu* crafts in everyday life and understand that they can still be useful nowadays. In this lesson, students learn how to modify the function of *Alsadu* into something that can be used at present and gain an appreciation of handmade objects and their cultural heritage.

I hoped that all these lessons would indirectly help the students to apprehend Kuwaiti Bedouin culture as part of their own cultural heritage.

4.3.3. Teaching/learning strategies

The curriculum unit experimented with and sought to promote art historical study using Erickson’s ‘questioning enquiry’ strategy. It also sought to encourage the use of sketchbooks for student research into artefacts in museums and elsewhere.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the unit applied Erickson’s (1993) enquiry method of learning art history through student-led investigations of specific examples of art and

attempted to use this as a means a means of increasing their understanding of art. In this curriculum unit teachers encourage students to investigate *Alsadu* artefacts through visual research, questioning and discussion and consider how they relate to the cultural and historical context in which they were produced. It is informed by the belief of Greer (1987) that one of the best ways of studying the culture of previous societies is to study their artworks. However, the teacher has to frame questions for discussion about (i) materials and techniques; (ii) the makers; (iii) the symbols and their meaning; (iv) the patterns and designs and (v) the function of the works under scrutiny.

The weaving in Lessons four and five played an important educational role. As mentioned previously (page 130), this learning strategy was influenced by Hickman's idea (2001) that it is important to combine art making with historical and cultural learning. In particular, I wanted to make sure that the female students who participated in the action research gained first-hand experience of weaving, and of a traditional women's craft.

In Britain and America, sketchbooks are routinely used for observational drawing, collecting information, drawing and reflection. In the lessons included in this curriculum unit, the students used sketchbooks as a tool for collecting information about their artistic heritage and recording their responses to the artefacts that they examined. The students participating in the curriculum experiments were directed to use their notebook as a research tool, in order to collect and reflect on information about *Alsadu* artefacts. They were expected to make sketches of these and of their designs and patterns at the museum and to use the notebooks in all the lessons to record their responses to what they saw, heard and read about. They were also expected to make notes from which they developed ideas for their own artworks. Their teachers were asked to encourage them to do this. The expectation here was that both teachers and students would use them to assess the students' learning during the lessons and that evaluation would focus on process rather

than on product (the finished pieces). In these lessons, I hoped that the teachers would use the sketchbooks also to evaluate what students had absorbed from the lessons, rather than focusing only on the quality of their drawings. During the implementation I was keen to find out if they were used correctly for this purpose, since I expected them to help the students to investigate *Alsadu* processes and products. Teachers were directed to ask students to gather information in their sketchbooks about *Alsadu* weaving and traditional culture in all the lessons. Having done so, they were expected to draw upon the sketchbooks to work out basic designs for their own artwork.

The curriculum unit applied Chapman's strategies (1978) of visiting museums and galleries and involving students in closely observing authentic artefacts and meeting local craftworkers. The *Alsadu House Museum* was the most suitable place to learn about *Alsadu* craft, because it is a museum of traditional crafts that brings together many aspects of the *Alsadu* tradition. It is run as a weavers' cooperative and was founded in 1979 under the patronage of Alshaikha Altaf Al-Sabah, a female member of the ruling Al-Sabah family who had had some anthropological training. The remaining Bedouin women weavers who still practise the craft are invited to lead workshops there from time to time to demonstrate their skills and teach *Alsadu* weaving techniques to visitors. It is a historic building, which dates from 1936, with courtyards flanked by six rooms, built in the traditional style of Kuwaiti architecture.

The international literature implied that meeting local artists or craftspeople and talking about their work, asking questions and discussing examples of their creations, is another important instructional strategy for learning about art. I suspected that many students in Kuwait had never met a professional artist or craftspeople. I was impressed by this idea of collaboration between art teachers and artists or craftspeople in art lessons (either in the classroom or on visits), and their working together by talking, asking questions and

discussing examples of their art or craft. One collaborative lesson in the Curriculum Unit took place at the *Alsadu* museum and the other in a school classroom.

All of the above strategies were incorporated into the curriculumunit in the hope that they would help to achieve its aims and objectives. The complete version of the curriculum unit can be found in English and Arabic in Appendix I.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING THE CURRICULUM UNIT FORMATIVELY

5.0. Introduction

This chapter describes the action when the curriculum materials were implemented for the first time in a Kuwaiti primary school. The purpose was to evaluate the curriculum model and materials and, at the same time, to reflect on the appropriateness of the research design and action research method. In this stage, I consulted the expert at Kuwaiti College about the design before and after I taught the curriculum unit myself. I also implemented the pre-test and post-test questionnaire (Appendix E) to the students before and after the curriculum unit was implemented.

I taught the curriculum unit to 17 students, aged 10-11, in Year Five at primary school A for girls, in collaboration with the art teacher, who took the role of observer. All the data about the curriculum collected during the implementation are described and evaluated in this chapter. First, the lessons are described one by one, together with the students' responses and my own and the teacher's evaluations. This is followed by an analysis and comparison of the data collected in the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. Finally, the chapter presents the conclusions that the observer and I came to, together with recommendations for changes to the lesson plans and questionnaire.

5.1. Timetable

Date	Activity	Participants
18 September (2011)	Pre-test Questionnaire	17 students
25 September	Lesson One	16 students
5 October	Lesson Two	17 students
9 October	Lesson Three	16 students
16 October	Lesson Four	16 students
23 October	Lesson Five	16 students
30 October	Lesson Six	16 students
31 October	Post-test Questionnaire	15 students

Table 2: Timetable for Cycle three.

5.2. Description of Lessons

5.2.1. Lesson one: Understanding the desert lifestyle (September 25 2011)

Description

I taught the first lesson of the curriculum unit to a class of 16 students, aged 10-11, who were divided into five small groups of 3 or 4. They were all Kuwaiti nationals. This lesson focused on understanding Bedouin society and culture. The stated learning objectives were as follows:

Students will:

1. Learn how the people who made these things used natural objects and the materials around them.
2. Learn how to distinguish natural from man-made objects in the past.
3. Learn that people have made crafts in the desert for a very long time.
4. Learn about the environmental impact of the desert on people's lives over time.
5. Learn about the natural environment in Kuwait and the basic character of life in the desert.

6. Acquire brief historical information about Kuwait from a documentary film.
7. Learn to value the everyday things around them created to meet basic human needs.
8. Begin to appreciate crafts and their importance to their makers.
9. Learn the value of natural resources and their relevance for people in the past.

The class teacher introduced me to the students at the beginning of the lesson. She told them that I would be teaching them art for a few weeks and wanted to try out a curriculum unit that aimed to increase their understanding of Kuwaiti culture. I said that the lessons would include art historical learning and focus in particular on traditional artefacts (in this case, *Alsadu* weaving).

Next, I introduced the students to the idea of sketchbooks. I explained their purpose, and gave them some ideas about how they could be used to collect and reflect on information, sketch, record their responses to what they saw, heard and read about in lessons and develop ideas for their own artwork. I showed them pages of sketchbooks from the UK (Figure 6) and went on to say that we were going to use them in the same way during the lessons. I had purchased 17 new sketchbooks and at this point I distributed one to each student.



Figure 6: Pages of a sketchbook from the UK.

I began the lesson with an extended exercise called, ‘What if you lived in the desert?’ The questions I posed were intended to encourage the students to imagine what life was like for people in Kuwait in the past. I wanted them to imagine the difference between their lives today and those of people in the past and to think about what it would have been like to live here long ago. When I asked ‘Have you ever slept in the desert with no electric light?’ one student said: ‘Oh, no! I cannot sleep without a light; it is very difficult for me’. Another said: ‘Their life was too hard’.

Before the students watched the DVD, I had asked them to write notes and make sketches, and they put their sketchbooks to use very quickly. As soon as I started to play, ‘*Alsadu Art of the Desert*,’ they wrote down notes and drew things they saw in the film and made notes. After 15 minutes, one student asked, ‘Teacher, when will the film end?’ I had hoped the film would widen their understanding of Bedouin society and culture, but it seemed to bore them, perhaps because it was too long. The observer’s photographs showed they seemed keen to record the information and make sketches as they watched (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Students recording information and sketching.

After watching the video, some students responded to my questions about it. They were able to describe the physical environment in Kuwait; list the materials, sources and handmade tools people used in the desert; name those used for weaving and how they were sourced; and reflect on how weaving is done. Then the discussion turned to questions of why and how it evolved as a craft. Although the film had given them some information about the natural environment of the desert and weaving materials and tools in the past, their answers were rather brief. I noticed that the ones who had not written down information did not take part in this discussion. Although the classroom discussion, provided some evidence of learning on the part of the students who responded to my questions, I could not estimate how much the rest had learned.

As the discussion continued, it was clear that some students were anxiously waiting for practical artwork to begin. Towards the end of the lesson, when I discussed the possibility of learning to weave *Alsadu*, most of them expressed a desire to make something. By the time the lesson ended, most of them had described some relevant aspects of Kuwaiti culture and people in the past and their use of natural objects. As one student noted, 'Life in the desert a long time ago was simple, but really difficult'. At the end of the lesson, I

informed the students we would visit the *House of Alsadu* in the next lesson and they responded enthusiastically to this idea.

Teacher evaluation

After the lesson, the teacher and I discussed and analysed her notes. I recorded this discussion in my notebook and it covered these subjects:

- The teacher thought the lesson was biased towards theoretical work; she pointed out that it had restricted practical and technical activities to collecting written information and sketching things seen in a film, such as *Alsadu* artefacts, the black tent (*bait alssha'ar*) and camels. I did not wholly agree with her, since I do not think art education is only about drawing and painting, but the students expected to be given practical activities in art lessons so I understood why some of them seemed bored. This was their very first lesson of art history, so it was unrealistic to expect to change their expectations at once, although this might be possible over time. They were accustomed to lessons in which only the first 15 minutes involved talking and they generally made art work of some kind for the remaining 65 minutes; the lesson structure in the new curriculum differed a good deal from this.
- The teacher thought the film was rather long. I found it interesting and had expected to show more of it; however, she suggested stopping it after the first few minutes and asking specific questions about it, then showing the rest in the same manner.
- She commented that student interaction was slight during class discussion and suggested using more varied teaching methods. We agreed that ways needed to be found to enliven the discussion in groups and by the whole class and motivate the

students to participate better after seeing the film. We also realised that it was important to provide them with more stimulus material, such as images of the Kuwaiti environment, materials, sources and hand tools used in the desert. We agreed therefore that this lesson plan needed to be modified by selecting more varied teaching/learning strategies and including images of the materials and tools used for weaving in the Kuwaiti desert.

- The teacher thought that some students were confused about the word 'culture'. I agreed. As Banks, an American educator who is an expert in multicultural education, has stressed (1988), students need to study the concept of culture in depth in order to fully understand it and what it means to belong to a cultural group. One reason for the difficulty for these students in defining and expressing the concept could be the sketchy covering of cultural issues in the Kuwaiti curriculum in general. Although they were all Kuwaiti nationals, they had not learned about national cultural heritage, either at home or school.
- We both considered the sketchbooks a fruitful device. Just over half (10 out of 16 students) codified and collected information in them as I wanted, once they had been taught how to do this. Although the idea of drawing examples of materials and tools and recording information about *Alsadu* was new to them, they used the sketchbooks in the same way as in the British examples. One student wrote 'Alsadu is the art of the desert'; in her sketchbook, another wrote 'Alsadu is the art of a society'. Both these statements came from the film. One student sketched Bedouin women weaving a camel cloth and yet another sketched a cushion. As mentioned earlier, Robinson (1999) finds that owning a sketchbook promotes self-esteem and enables the owner to develop positive attitudes to work across the curriculum and these students responded to this new learning tool enthusiastically.

Researcher Evaluation

- Most of the objectives for this lesson were achieved, as evidenced in the classroom discussion. But I did not put objective seven into practice, because it did not seem suitable at the time. I realised that objective nine needed to be more specific and refer directly to desert resources.

It seemed to me that this first lesson was welcomed by the class teacher and students and I felt that they accepted my visits to their class, I felt excited about the next lesson.

5.2.2. Lesson two: Investigating and documenting artefacts in the museum (5 October 2011)

Description

In this lesson I took the students to the museum at *Alsadu House* accompanied by their teacher acting as observer. No other schools were visiting at 10 am when we arrived, which meant that the space in the gallery was free for me to teach the lesson and for the students to investigate authentic examples of *Alsadu* weaving. The broad objective was to learn how to, investigate and analyse artefacts. Specific objectives were to:

Students will:

1. Practise organising and presenting visual and verbal information in a sketchbook and talking about artefacts.
2. Consider how limited Bedouin people's resources were for their crafts.
3. Understand that each piece of *Alsadu* weaving has its own meaning and function.

Before we arrived at the museum, I asked the students to use this visit to look at, touch and investigate the artefacts. Once we reached the museum workshop, which is a small open room used to teach *Alsadu* weaving, I reminded them that the aim of the visit was to study and investigate examples of *Alsadu*. I gave them each a worksheet to complete that I had prepared in advance (Appendix F) and explained some of the questions. I did not anticipate that they would bring cameras. Initially, the museum staff told me that they did not allow photography, but when I explained that the cameras would be used as a research tool, they gave permission. However, the students started to photograph everything, so I forbade this until they had completed the worksheets. But I suggested at this point that it would be valuable to photograph whatever item they had chosen to study for use as a source of inspiration for making their own artefact later on.

Next, I showed the students around the whole museum. The *Alsadu* collection is housed in four of the six rooms and I identified the two rooms where I wanted them to study the artefacts and asked them not to waste time elsewhere. Then I asked them to choose one piece of *Alsadu* weaving and study the materials, design, function and significance. Once they had made a choice, they were to sketch it and write notes about it. I left them alone for 20 minutes to carry out individual research. Some students sat on the floor near their chosen artefacts and others stood next to them. Some of them began to ask me to explain specific words on the worksheets, including ‘patterns’ and ‘function’ (Figure 8). I could not answer some of their random questions about the artefacts since the museum did not make accurate factual historical information about items in the collection available and the items did not have labels. So I let the students know these questions might possibly be answered by a practising weaver in the next lesson. While this was going on, the teacher-observer took photographs of the students at work.



Figure 8: Student researching artefacts at the museum.

After 30 minutes of exploring and investigating selected *Alsadu* artefacts, I organised the students into four small groups of four or five to spend 10 minutes sharing their results with each other (Figure 9). During this activity they discussed the specific examples of *Alsadu* weaving that they had been studying, such as a *Hodaj* (a camel litter that women used when travelling), *Basat* (rugs), *Masanid* (cushion) and *Qata* (tent dividers), consulted their drawings and notes and talked about the colours, shapes, patterns and functions of the artefacts. During the discussion, I noted down that they had collected and were exchanging appropriate information.



Figure 9: Students working in four small groups at the museum.

At the end of the lesson I organised a 10-minute whole-class discussion, in order to establish whether or not the general aims of the lesson had been met (Figure 10). I focused on augmenting the information that students had discovered for themselves about *Alsadu* weaving and its role in Kuwaiti culture. During this discussion, I provided them with some of the information about *Alsadu* artefacts they could not find in the museum; for example, about their functions and cultural meanings.



Figure 10: Whole class discussion in the museum.

They all answered ‘no’ to the questions, ‘Have you ever done any weaving?’ and ‘Do you like weaving?’ but said they would like to learn *Alsadu*. One student said, ‘Can you teach us how to weave?’ I told them that a professional weaver would visit their classroom in the next lesson and teach them how to weave a piece of cloth.

The students had demonstrated that they could talk about artworks in some detail in this lesson, but I wanted to find out if they understood how to organise and present visual and verbal information about images in their sketchbooks. So, when we returned to school, I gave each student two blank cards for homework. On one, I asked them to write down the findings from their research and class discussions about a particular artefact. On the other, I asked them to draw this artefact. I reminded them to use the information collected on the worksheet and in the sketchbooks. I went on to say that we would use these cards in the next lesson to play an information game; anyone who came without them would not be able to play.

Teacher evaluation

During the after-class evaluation the teacher and I analysed the lesson resources, teaching/learning strategies and lesson content. She told me what in her judgment had worked well or not:

- She thought the first ten minutes were wasted time, since I had had to use them to explain the purposes of the lesson and students were not fully prepared for the trip in advance. On reflection, I decided that they should have been told in advance the purpose of the visit in the previous lesson and also the method of investigating and documenting artefacts and how to use the worksheets. This would have saved time

at the start. She noted that the lesson plan specified 20 minutes for research and exploration, but that the students had needed an extra 10 minutes to complete their work. I concluded that this was because the activity of observing and finding out about artefacts was new to them.

- The teacher thought that the class and group discussion in this lesson was a reasonably successful instructional method for getting the students to discuss aspects of *Alsadu* woven articles, such as their colours, shapes, patterns and function. When they shared their findings with each other, it was clear that they had collected appropriate information and had learned from this.
- Some students found it hard to choose an object to study and it took them a long time. We agreed that some students needed more direction so as to make sure they all studied an appropriate artefact.
- We agreed that the questions on the worksheets had helped the students to undertake exploration in a systematic manner. They seemed responsive to this educational aid/resource. We knew that when students in Kuwait are taken on museum visits they do not usually receive guidance on methods of research and often do not take writing materials with them. From the teacher's perspective, this visit was successful mainly because of the work sheets.
- The teacher and I agreed that visiting museums and investigating their collections is a successful tactic for cultural learning. This lesson established that the museum concerned was a good resource for teaching art history to primary school students in Kuwait, where they could pursue their own learning in privacy in whatever way they preferred. According to Stone (2001), this leads to significant participation in learning and is a good idea.

Researcher evaluation

- On reflection, I found the idea of photographing exhibits helpful and concluded that cameras can function as a useful tool for investigating artefacts. If students photographed the items they studied they could use the images as a source of inspiration for making their own artefacts. I had not considered this in advance and the students could have used photography more reflectively to compile materials during their research. I decided that in future I would ask the students to bring cameras but remind them not to photograph everything.

At the end of this evaluation, I decided to take into account all the above points in developing the curriculum unit. I realised that the main issue I had to consider in revising this lesson was how to make the museum visit successful for all primary school children in Kuwait.

5.2.3. Lesson three: Talking and presenting artefacts (9 October 2011)

Description

The stated objectives for this lesson were to:

1. Learn to talk about crafts.
2. Increase the students' understanding and appreciation of their culture and give them the opportunities and means to reflect on culturally learned values and beliefs about a traditional women's craft.
3. Describe, analyse and interpret crafts from the past and develop their art and craft vocabulary.
4. Encourage them to respect each other's opinions when sharing ideas with classmates and teachers.

Since the lesson content was organised around and depended entirely on the results of the homework set the previous lesson, I began by asking how many students had completed it. Five students had not, eleven had and there was one absentee. I asked the eleven students to show their homework to me. Then I introduced the idea of playing my ‘information card game’ in groups using their cards.

First of all, I organised the seating for group work, so as to accommodate the five students who had done no preparation, distributing them among different groups.

In the ‘information card game’, each student in a group had to place on the table the card on which she had drawn an artefact and hide the other one which carried information about it. One student began the game by drawing a picture card’ then the card owner had to read the information on the matching hidden card. This continued until all the cards had been drawn. In this way students exchanged all the information they had gathered in the museum.

As I walked around the groups I observed they were interested in the game and enjoying it. They were listening to the information that each student read out as she showed her picture card and asking her questions. The students recorded some information in their sketchbooks. As they played, the class teacher took some photographs which reflected their enjoyment (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Students playing the information game.

When they had discussed their picture cards, I asked each group member to make a five-minute presentation of one artefact of her choice. As each student presented a card to the class, the others asked questions about the artefact. During this discussion I asked each presenter questions intended to increase the students' knowledge about the artefact, such as, 'What does it tell us about the people who made them, their culture and the society?' or 'Do you use this artefact nowadays? And why?' In this way they shared and discussed their discoveries.

Then I gave the class more information about the materials, designs motifs, patterns and colours of *Alsadu* artefacts when I posed the questions below. As I did this, I showed them the photographs of artefacts I had taken at the *Alsadu* museum.

When we discussed the materials, the questions I asked included 'Why do you think this particular material was used, instead of something else; and where was it found or bought from? Were these materials available to everyone in the past?' The students mostly answered appropriately. For example, one student said, 'These were the materials (e.g.,

camel hair) available at the time and could have been found all around in the deserts of Kuwait and Arab peninsula'. Another said, 'They were available to everyone at the time'.

When I questioned them about the motifs, patterns, symbols and colours in the designs, I asked: 'What colours were used in these artefacts? What patterns do you find in them? Do they have any motifs? If so, what do they look like? What are the meanings of the patterns motifs and designs?' In response to the question about the colours, one student answered 'The colours used in these artefacts were red, black, white, beige and green'; another said that '*Alsadu* weaving was done in different sizes with motifs and designs which were simple and 'traditional'.

Some questions about the artefacts' function and form were: 'Is the shape of each artefact defined only by its use? Is that all?' In their answers some students referred only to their functions but others mentioned their aesthetic appeal. For example one student said, 'Many of the things that the people of the time needed for everyday life were woven, for example, rugs, cushion and tent dividers'. Another said, 'The shape of each artefact was defined by its use and this gives it its beauty'.

Then I discussed the meanings of these artefacts with them while posing the following questions: 'In the past, what was the main purpose of weaving? What is the main purpose of weaving today? How important were these artefacts to the weavers and the others in their community? What did they mean to them?' Their answers informed me that 'In the past, weavers worked for their families, because they had no other way of supplying their basic needs'. One student said 'Nowadays, there is no need for women to weave parts of the structure of their homes'. All this information had been mentioned in the previous lesson and remembered.

I ended the lesson with a practical activity. After I had asked the students to collect all the cards about *Alsadu* weaving I made a group artwork out of them using a skein of wool to join them together and hung them on a big wooden frame (40 x 70 cm). This idea came from my previous teaching experience.

Teacher evaluation

Directly after the lesson, I met the teacher to discuss her comments. She talked about the learning strategies, in particular, the game with the cards, then the group discussion and finally the student presentations:

- The teacher did not think giving students homework for art class was successful. Five out of the sixteen students present had not completed it and had not brought cards to class. With hindsight, I thought that this was due to the low status of art education in Kuwait. Art is not considered a basic subject; hence, art teachers do not give students homework, knowing that they would not pay it much attention.
- But the teacher thought that getting students to talk about their artefacts in groups and the ensuing discussions had worked well. In my view this was successful because it motivated them to describe and discuss their findings, and display their efforts to the class as a whole. Kuwaiti students are not accustomed to the idea of discussion and commentary with peers and we agreed that this strategy had successfully overcome anticipated constraints such as self-consciousness and nervousness.
- The teacher thought that the students' presentations were useful in helping them to exchange their findings and record new information in their sketchbooks. I agreed with her that they were beginning to master observational skills. The students had appeared attentive and shown respect for each other's opinions when sharing ideas. I concluded that this way of working was successful in this instance, because it gave the students an

opportunity to express, discuss and justify their own opinions. Exchanging and sharing information is not common practice in art classes in Kuwait but this new experience had facilitated learning about culture and art in society in Kuwait.

- The information card game was new for the students and also the teacher. She liked the idea of playing a game in class. We agreed that this strategy had worked well because the students had acquired a good deal of knowledge and information in an engaging way.

Researcher evaluation

- Objective two was not covered in this lesson, because it was too difficult for the students to understand.

The students' regular class teacher concluded her evaluation by reassuring me that this lesson had some successful points. The game was an innovative way of encouraging students to discuss things together and they had talked freely about the artefacts. So they had begun to develop an understanding of the ways to talk about crafts. I was convinced the students were more knowledgeable about the artefacts now and hoped that this would lead them to appreciate their cultural heritage also.

5.2.4. Lesson four: Meeting a weaver and starting to weave (16 October 2011)

Description

There were five learning objectives for this lesson, as follows.

Students will:

1. Learn how to weave from a woman weaver who practises a traditional craft.

2. Understand and be able to practice basic characteristics of the traditional art of weaving. i.e., learn how to use traditional craft materials and set up and weave on a simple loom.
3. Consolidate/reflect on what they have learned about *Alsadu* materials and techniques.
4. Learn to value art historical knowledge as a way of coming to know another time and place.
5. Consider women's roles in traditional Kuwaiti society and today.

I introduced this lesson by asking the students, 'Who will remind us of what we learned in the last lesson?' and 'Would you like to meet a woman who weaves artefacts?' The students said that they had learned how to talk about artefacts and presented and discussed the findings of their research in class, drawn an *Alsadu* artefact and described the colours, patterns and designs.

When I asked if they had ever met a weaver before or learned any *Alsadu* weaving techniques, they all said 'no'. Next I asked them to imagine they were living 'the life of a weaver' in the past and to think about how, when, where and why they had learned their craft and how they felt about it. After I told them that they were going to meet a professional weaver, I suggested questions that they could put to her, such as, 'Which members of the family used to do the weaving in the past? What materials did they use and where did they come from? Who had taught her to weave? What had she made? What did she feel about this work?' 'How long did it take her to make something?' 'What patterns/designs did she like best and why?' I went onto say that the local *Alsadu* weaver who was coming to class had woven the pieces they bought last week at *Alsadu House Museum* and then I invited her into the room. Their faces expressed happiness and excitement. I asked the weaver to tell us about herself. During the lesson she told us stories about her experience of weaving, and her own training, and passed on a great deal

of knowledge about women's roles in the past, *Alsadu* crafts materials past and present, and the artefacts themselves (Figure 12).



Figure 12: Weaver showing the students *Alsadu* materials.

I encouraged the students to ask her whatever questions they wanted and some of them used the ones I had suggested. One question was ‘Who taught you how to weave?’ and then, ‘Did you like weaving or did you do it because your mum asked you to help her?’ I asked her other questions also, intended to motivate the students to weave, such as ‘Did you do this work when you were the same age as these students?’ When she answered ‘yes’, one student asked, ‘Did you find it easy or difficult?’ To which she answered, ‘I found it easy, because I used to see my mum and grandma weaving *Alsadu* when I was younger’. The students poured out questions and it was clear that they found the meeting stimulating. I had to stop them in order to complete the lesson on schedule.

Next, she showed them some weaving materials and tools. They included different kinds of yarn (goats’ and camels’ hair and sheep’s wool), a hook beater (*Al Girn*), a spindle, a ground loom and natural dyes such as madder (*Fuwwah*), turmeric (*kurkum*), dried limes (*Lumi*), pomegranate skin (*QishrRomman*) and a wild plant with yellow flowers, used to

obtain a yellowish-orange dye (*Argoon*). Following this, she showed them chemical dyes and explained the difference and briefly outlined the processes involved in spinning, dyeing and weaving yarn.

In addition, she described what the materials look like in their natural environment and their special qualities. For example, she told them that goat's hair is the best yarn to use for tents; because when it gets wet, it swells and the natural oils in the hair tighten the woven structure; it sheds rain and is hard wearing and the black colour absorbs heat. She explained that goat fibres are used in the construction of tents for these reasons. When she displayed the different types of wool, I asked the students to touch each one briefly to feel the textures, but they were reluctant to do so, even when she assured them that she had washed it. They also hesitated to touch a hook beater.

During discussion led by the weaver the students wrote notes and sketched the craft materials. They learned about her training from stories of her childhood. When they asked her where, why and how she had learned to weave, she answered: 'I learned how to weave at your age', 'I learned to help my mum when she wove' and 'from my mum and my auntie'. They learned about the weaving equipment also, the materials and pattern sources, the role of this craft in traditional Kuwaiti society, the traditional processes of weaving *Alsadu* and traditional woven patterns. When I checked their sketchbooks during the lesson, I found the students had made notes of a great deal of what the weaver had said. For example, one student wrote 'The weaver learned how to weave from her grandma and her aunt' and most of them wrote down the names of the natural dyes and sketched the plants and materials that the weaver had shown them. Next, the weaver sat down at a table with the students all around her and began to demonstrate some simple techniques on a small wooden loom. She showed them how to set this loom up and make a warp and weft. Then she showed them how to create a flat weave (Figure 13).



Figure 13: Weaver showing the students how to create a flat weave.

I had asked the carpenter to make some small wooden looms with seven parts resembling ones used in the past. At this point, I distributed one to each student. They took about ten minutes to set them up. As they worked, the weaver and I moved from group to group helping them when they got into difficulties (Figure 14).



Figure 14: Students weaving *Alsadu*.

I concluded the lesson by consolidating what we had learned about how to weave and women's roles in traditional society, the function of *Alsadu* and the materials and

techniques involved. Finally, I asked for feedback on their feelings about weaving and what they had liked or disliked about doing it. I asked them if it was easy or difficult and if they would like to do it again. They answered that they enjoyed weaving. Although some of them said it was easy and others that it was difficult, they all wanted to complete their work. I had to remind them that the lesson was finished and collect the materials for use next time. Before they left the classroom, some students wanted to know if the weaver would visit again next week. She asked them, 'Did you enjoy it? Did you like it?' and they answered 'Yes'. She told them that she would come the following week and teach some new skills. The students thanked her before they left for their next class.

Teacher evaluation

In the discussion with the teacher afterwards we talked over the following points.

- The teacher thought the idea of bringing a weaver into the class was a good one. The lesson was successful, in her view, because of the way in which the collaboration had been organised. She said, 'I think the main reason it worked well and that the dialogue between the students and weaver was interesting was that she gave them a lot of information about weaving in an appealing way'. She also liked my strategy of giving the students' time to think of questions to ask in advance and my suggestions. I agreed with her that collaborating with a local artist or crafts worker was a successful strategy for introducing these students to their artistic heritage. As Chapman, (1978) has pointed out, it also gives students a chance to gain first-hand experience of art techniques, and directly observe the production of a work. These students benefited from watching a hands-on demonstration by an expert in weaving, something which neither the class teacher nor myself were able to do.

- The first ten minutes of practice when the students setup the loom was lost time. The teacher and I agreed it would be better to devote practice time to applying weaving techniques. Setting up the seven parts of the loom was time-consuming but so is learning to weave. They both needed more time than I had allowed.

Researcher evaluation

- I was interested in the students' reluctance to touch the materials she displayed, once they realised that they came from animals. I suspect the reason for this was their lack of any direct connection with nature in general and natural materials in particular.
- On reflection, I decided that the fourth objective was too broad and did not relate closely enough to the craft of *Alsadu*. I realised this objective could not be achieved in one lesson only.
- During the lesson I noticed that some students found it difficult to start weaving. I was prepared for this, because it was a completely new experience for them. This lesson was devoted to learning the necessary basic skills and some difficulty was to be expected. At the same time, supporting this learning was difficult. Although the weaver moved from group to group and demonstrated how to do certain things repeatedly, it was hard for her to assist every student. When she taught them individually she had to repeat herself many times.

I realised that all these points would have to be taken into account when the lesson was revised so as to achieve the objectives more efficiently.

5.2.5. Lesson five: Weaving *Alsadu* patterns (23 October 2011)

Description

The learning objectives for this lesson were as follows.

Students will:

1. Practise some basic weaving processes and techniques.
2. Recognise some design characteristics of *Alsadu* and how to distinguish between patterns.
3. Understand how *Alsadu* weaving was influenced by Bedouin culture.
4. Learn how to weave *Al Dallaha* and develop ideas from this for their own artwork.
5. Appreciate and value handmade work.

The same weaver was present in this lesson. She collaborated with me on teaching it and played an important part in teaching the students the meaning of different *Alsadu* designs and how to weave the *AlDallaha* pattern.

To begin with, I asked the students to recall what they had learned from their previous meeting with her and the practical skills they had acquired. They answered that they learned many things about her craft materials and spinning, dyeing and weaving. She had taught them how to set up a loom, construct a warp and weft and flat weave a small piece of fabric.

The lesson itself started with my showing a Power Point presentation of *Alsadu* patterns, such as *Dhurus el-khail*, *Midhkhar*, *Hubub*, *Dhalla*, *Aein*, *Uwairjan*, *Dallaha* and *Shajarah*, which I had created especially for this lesson. I asked the students how they differed and what they meant. They understood that the patterns varied, and noticed that some were made up of lines and others of dots and triangles. They were unsure what these

meant. Then the weaver told them the names of the patterns, explained some of the symbolism and discussed the different designs.

After this, I asked if they could name some patterns, knew why the weavers had chosen them and how were they understood within Bedouin culture. I invited them to speculate about why the weavers wanted the patterns to look this way and what they meant to them.

The students named some patterns correctly, but found *Uwairjan* difficult to remember.

They thought the weavers used horses' teeth, earrings, scissors and combs as motifs because they found them beautiful and significant. I told them some people today understand the patterns simply as abstract or geometrical shapes and the students said that this was what they looked like to them.

Next, I introduced the practical task of weaving the *AlDallaha* pattern. The weaver sitting at the table first demonstrated and explained the technique to them all (Figure 15).



Figure 15: Weaver demonstrating the *AlDallaha* technique.

When she had finished, I distributed the looms to the students and left them to weave the *AlDallaha* pattern into their original pieces. The students seemed enthusiastic; as soon as I had distributed the tools, they started weaving again without asking for help (Figure 16).



Figure 16: Student weaving using the *AlDallaha* technique.

The weaver and I moved among the groups and gave individual feedback. I noted that they found it difficult to get started, but once they had completed the first row it became easier. One student commented, ‘Weaving *AlDallaha* was hard and demanded concentration’. I agreed that there is a need to focus on what one is doing.

I concluded the lesson by asking a few questions about, for instance, what the different *Alsadu* patterns were called, including the one they had woven in this lesson and, what the patterns represented to the weavers. A few students had not completed their work by the end, but they had all learned the basic techniques of creating flat weave stripes and how to weave *AlDallaha*.

I asked the weaver to kindly complete the weaving of those who had not finished so that they would be free to work alongside the others in the next lesson. I realised that it was

unlikely that other teachers in Kuwait would be able to lead this lesson in future and that I needed to find a way of solving this problem.

Teacher evaluation

I listened to the classroom teacher's comments directly afterwards and we evaluated the lesson together. We discussed the following points:

1. She thought that the PowerPoint presentation served the lesson well. This was confirmed by the fact that the students responded to it with great enthusiasm and used the images to record some of the patterns and the design characteristics of *Alsadu*.
2. We both thought that asking a weaver to interpret the patterns was a successful way of communicating this kind of information. We noted that the students had easily absorbed the lesson content from her in a simple way. I saw this as important, because it was new even for me. She had communicated some art historical information that I felt was equally important (explaining, for example, how Bedouin culture influenced the designs and what the patterns meant to the weavers). So, the students gained knowledge and skills from the weaver's experience, and I was glad that she could provide it in a clear, straight forward way.
3. We agreed that the sketchbooks played an important role in the learning in this lesson. The students had listed and sketched the *Alsadu* patterns in them and used notes effectively to record information, such as names. They had also understood that each pattern had a meaning for the weavers and in some cases could recall them. We concluded that one reason the lesson had been successful was the way in which they had used their sketchbooks as a resource.

4. We agreed that student interaction was excellent. When the looms were distributed they seemed willing and keen to create artefacts and resumed weaving without waiting for help. I thought that this showed they were confident about working on their own, even though some of them had never woven anything before.
5. Not all the students managed to incorporate an *AlDallaha* pattern into their piece. I agreed with the teacher that they showed different levels of skill. While some students succeeded in weaving it correctly, others did not get it right. As noted above, they found it difficult to get started and, as one student said, it certainly ‘demanded concentration’. Although weaving *AlDallaha* patterns is quite difficult I wanted to teach them to make at least one traditional pattern so they could experience what it feels like to weave in a traditional way. On reflection, I decided that one good reason for teaching the *AlDallaha* pattern to students of this young age is that it requires patience.

Researcher evaluation

1. With hindsight, I realised that the time allocated for the practical work was once again too short. The task took too long and some students did not complete their work. I concluded that the main reason for this was that the pattern is hard to weave and it was impossible for the weaver to give each student enough help. They could not finish because they had to wait to ask for her advice. With only a limited time at her disposal, there was no way to avoid this. She tried to give one-to-one help but often had to repeat the same instructions and again.
2. The pieces that the students wove were of different sizes, according to their individual aptitude. Most pieces of weaving were rather small. I realised at this

point that the students with very small pieces would not be able to create an artefact out of them in the next lesson. Consequently, I decided to prepare some simple artefacts in advance, which they could decorate with their weaving.

3. When I reflected on this lesson afterwards I realised that the word ‘artwork’ in objective four ought to be replaced by ‘artefacts’, which is a more suitable term for a functional craft. I also decided to replace the term ‘handmade work’ in objective five with ‘*Alsadu* artefacts’, so as to be more specific.

5.2.6. Lesson six: Creating artworks based on the theme of Kuwait’s cultural heritage (30 October 2011)

Description

This lesson had five main objectives.

Students will:

1. Create artefacts based on the cultural heritage.
2. Understand that the function and meaning of *Alsadu* weaving can change.
3. Value *Alsadu* craft skills.
4. Understand handmade objects are still useful in everyday life.
5. Evaluate the curriculum unit as a whole.

I began the lesson by telling the students a story that I had invented, called ‘Hanan and her grandmother’s gift’ (see Appendix G, Lesson Six). Then I asked them what they had learned from it. Next, I questioned them about what they could use their *Alsadu* pieces for. One student said “With our *Alsadu* pieces we could make lots of things – anything we like”. I showed them examples of small functional objects sold at the museum, such as

notebooks, a pencil case, bags and purses with *Alsadu* weaving on the covers (Figure 17), to stimulate ideas.



Figure 17: Small functional objects sold at the museum.

I distributed readymade plain fabric bags, hair bands and pencil cases to the students whose woven pieces were very small and asked them to think how they might decorate them with their *Alsadu* weaving. The students whose woven pieces were big enough were encouraged to create their own artefacts.

I encouraged them also to refer to the notes and drawings they had made in their sketchbooks in each lesson to develop design ideas. At this point, they made more notes and drawings of the designs they were developing. While they were doing this, I walked around the class for 10 minutes and gave individuals critical feedback to help them refine and improve their designs. One student wrote in her sketchbook, 'I would like to make a mobile case because I don't have one, but my piece of weaving is too small!' For this reason, she decided to decorate a readymade fabric bag with her *Alsadu* weaving.

At this point, the students started to work on their artefacts. Whereas some students with smaller woven pieces used them to decorate the readymade objects I had supplied; others

used their larger woven pieces to create new artefacts such as small bags and bracelets (Figure 18).



Figure 18: Students' artefacts.

I liked their ideas and the designs and completed artefacts were evidence that they had used their newly acquired weaving skills to create something useful for present day life.

Finally, I asked the students what they had learned from the curriculum unit as a whole; and whether they thought about traditional crafts the same way now; or considered them useful and, if so, how. Most of them answered that they had learned how to use *Alsadu* to make contemporary artefacts and that the techniques were still useful even though they were very old. One student said 'I made a small bag out of *Alsadu* for my mobile'. Another said 'I would like to make an accessory such as a bracelet'. Even though some of them had used their woven pieces to decorate the objects I provided, they had all drawn on Kuwait's cultural heritage for design purposes and discovered ways of bringing it up to date.

Teacher evaluation

Directly after the lesson, the teacher consulted her notes and we discussed some of the students' comments. The main points covered were as follows:

1. The teacher thought the students were interested in the story and said it was a good way to start the lesson. She said the students believed in it and liked it. I agreed with this observation, because when it ended, one student asked me, "Is this story true?" This question implied that she identified with the characters, perhaps because I told them that Hanan was about their age.
2. The teacher emphasised the positive role of the sketchbooks in developing ideas for artworks. Whereas I agreed with her that the students had used them successfully to store information I was disappointed that they had not used them very much in this lesson to develop ideas for new artefacts. I understood, from reading about their use in Western countries, that this was their main purpose, in contrast to the way they are sometimes used in Kuwait – as a kind of scrapbook. I was pleased, nonetheless, that these students had succeeded in doing something different with them.
3. The teacher said that providing the students with readymade objects (such as the plain fabric bags, hair bands and pencil cases) had stimulated them to think about new functions for *Alsadu*.
4. We agreed that they had succeeded in finding new uses for the weaving that were relevant to their everyday lives. The results successfully communicated and displayed an aspect of Kuwait's artistic heritage. But the quality of their designs and construction skills varied. Five students designed and made artefacts well,

four tried their best and the others made an effort, but the results were poorly executed.

Researcher evaluation

1. On reflection, I concluded that the wording of objective one for this lesson should be changed, given that some students had not created their own artefacts but made use of objects prepared in advance.

5.3. Analysis of responses to the pre-test and post-test worksheet

A questionnaire (see Appendix E) in the form of a worksheet was submitted as a pre-test to the students before Lesson 1. On 18 September 2011, I distributed copies of it to the seventeen students. The same worksheet was used for a post-test after the lessons finished on 31 October. Only 15 students answered the post-test questions because there were two absentees. The pre-test and post-test question-and-answer sheets had exactly the same wording on them and the purpose was to assess their knowledge and understanding of art history and culture before and after the curriculum unit and try to establish if had increased as a result of the lessons. They were completed in the same classroom and I did not interfere so as ensure trustworthy results.

All the answers were taken into account in comparing and contrasting the performance of the students before and after the curriculum unit. In the post-test most of the students used information acquired in the lessons to help them give fuller answers. Generally speaking, most students were able to answer more questions the second time and it was clear that they remembered and could use detailed information absorbed in the lessons.

5.4. Findings

After implementing the curriculum the first time and evaluating it formatively, I arrived at the findings and conclusions set out below. I begin by reporting the findings about the objectives. Then I report the findings about the activities and the strengths and weaknesses of each lesson in the curriculum unit. Finally, I report the changes that I decided to make to the lesson plans which I hoped would improve the curriculum model the second time it was implemented.

5.5. Revisions to the lesson plans

When all the lessons had all been evaluated formatively I decided to make the following minor improvements to the curriculum materials.

5.5.1. Objectives

I concluded that the long list of objectives in the curriculum unit needed to be simplified and reduced. Specifically I identified a need to:

1. Refine some vocabulary in the objectives for Lesson Five, for example, to:
 - i. Replace the word ‘artwork’ with ‘artefact’ in objective four, which is a more suitable term for a functional craft such as *Alsadu*.
 - ii. Replace the words ‘Handmade work’ with ‘*Alsadu* artefacts’ in objective five, so as to be more specific.
2. Refine two objectives for Lesson one which were too broad. It was unrealistic to expect students to learn how to value their cultural heritage and natural resources

at this stage in the curriculum unit. I decided that objective seven ‘Learn to value everyday things around them created to meet basic human needs’ should be eliminated, and to alter objective nine, ‘Learn the value of natural resources and their relevance for people in the past’, in order to focus specifically on desert resources.

3. To eliminate objective two in Lesson three, because it was too difficult for me to implement, given the nature of the curriculum content.
4. To alter the wording of objective four in Lesson four, ‘Students will learn to value art historical knowledge as a way of coming to know another time and place’, to read ‘Students will learn about the history of *Alsadu* as a way of coming to know another time and place,’ to make it more specific.
5. To alter the first objective in Lesson six: ‘To help students to create artefacts based on cultural heritage; and understand that the function and meaning of *Alsadu* weaving can change’ to ‘decorate contemporary artefacts with *Alsadu* weaving’. It was clear that it was too difficult for all of them to make their own artefacts in such a short time and that many students needed more time to create an artefact themselves.

5.5.2. Content

1. From their answers to the pre- and post-curriculum questionnaire, it was clear that some students did not understand the meaning of the concept ‘culture’. I decided the curriculum materials should include a suitable definition and instructions for teachers to write key vocabulary items for each lesson on the board at the beginning of each lesson; and ask students to write them down in their sketchbooks.

2. The task of weaving a pattern without expert help is too hard. I decided to produce step by step instructions for flat weaving, which teachers could give to students.
3. The students experienced difficulties in copying the *Al Dallaha* pattern so the curriculum materials should include some step by step instructions for making this.

5.5.3. Teaching methods

1. Some students resisted the idea of doing homework in Lesson three so I decided to include in the instructions for this activity some reasons why the homework was important. In the revised instructions for Lesson two, teachers were advised to insist strongly that students who failed to do this would not be allowed to play the game with the rest of the class in the next lesson.
2. The DVD in Lesson one lasted 20 minutes and bored some students. I decided to recommend stopping the film at five/ten-minute intervals so that the teacher could discuss it with the students. I also recommend that a big screen should be used and the class should be seated appropriately so that everyone can see the film.
3. Some students took a long time to choose an object to study in Lesson two. I decided to advise teachers to guide them in selecting one artefact.
4. In Lesson two, some students surprised me by bringing cameras to the museum. I decided to instruct teachers to ask the students in advance to bring cameras and give instructions for their use.
5. Some students found it difficult to begin weaving in Lesson four. I decided to include in the curriculum materials a worksheet with step by step instructions and recommend the teacher to provide students with copies of it.

5.5.4. Lesson preparation

1. The first ten minutes in Lesson two were wasted, I decided to instruct the teachers to inform the students how to use and complete the worksheets in the previous lesson.
2. At the start of the museum visit, the students took photographs of everything, instead of completing the worksheets. I decided to ask teachers to prepare for the museum visit in advance lesson by giving students instructions on when and how to use photography as a research tool.

5.5.5. Organisation of lesson content

1. The students took longer than the time allocated to complete their research in the museum. I decided to increase the time allowed for researching artefacts from 20 to 30 minutes, so as to get more satisfactory results.
2. The first ten minutes of practice time in Lesson four were lost, since the students took ten minutes to setup the looms. In the second implementation of the unit I advised teachers to prepare the looms themselves in advance to save lesson time.

5.5.6. Resources

1. Student interaction was minimal during the class discussion in Lesson one.

Consequently, to motivate student discussion, I decided to add to the illustrations in the curriculum materials some new images of the desert and *Al-Sadu*, in order to support the film.

5.5.7. Students' response to the curriculum materials

1. The students were unwilling to touch the natural materials, although it was important that they did so to appreciate the texture. I decided to advise teachers to inform students that the materials had been washed and insist that they should touch them.

5.6. Changes to the student questionnaire

After I had analysed the answers on the pre-test and post-test worksheets, I decided to make the following minor improvements to the design of the questionnaire (see Appendix E). Specifically:

1. Some questions resulted in yes/no answers only. I realised they needed to be re-worded so as to elicit more specific information about student learning.
2. The answers to the two questions about the word *culture* revealed that the students did not understand this concept. It was clear that these questions should be made simpler and clearer.
3. Some questions did not focus closely enough on the aims and content of the lessons, as regards learning about Kuwaiti culture and women artists, so I needed to modify them.
4. The wording of the question about artists should be changed and another word in Arabic used, because the term *artist* is confusing:
 - i. It has many meanings in Kuwait, extending to actors, singers and visual artists.
 - ii. Some students thought it referred only to painters or sculptors and did not apply to craftspeople.
 - iii. In Kuwait people do not believe that women weavers are artists.

For these reasons I decided to change the wording in Arabic to make it more specific to the curriculum unit aims and more appropriate for the Kuwaiti cultural context.

After implementing and formatively evaluating the curriculum unit, I made the above changes to the curriculum materials before they were tested out again by other teachers.

CHAPTER SIX: IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING THE CURRICULUM UNIT SUMMATIVELY

6.0. Introduction

This chapter describes the second implementation of the curriculum unit, after which I reflected for the last time on the appropriateness of the research design. Before it was implemented again the objectives were changed significantly to make them clearer and the questionnaire was also changed for the sake of clarity. At this stage, theart teachers from two girls' schools (school B in *Alahmadi* authority and school C in *Alfarwaniya* authority) taught the curriculum unit to classes of Year Five students, aged 10-11. I observed their classes and collected data about what happened. Afterwards, we evaluated the action together before I consulted with a Kuwaiti expert from the College of Basic Education about the outcomes. The chapter begins by reporting on two professional development workshops that I organised for the teachers before they implemented the curriculum unit. It goes on to describe the sequence of events in the lessons in both schools and the students' response. This is followed by a section reporting on the teachers' and my own evaluations of the lessons. Next there is a short analysis and comparison of the pre-test and post-test data. Finally it presents the conclusions on which the team agreed for finalising the curriculum design.

6.1. Timetable

LESSONS AND OBSERVATION DATES		
LESSONS	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C
Lesson One	6 March 2012	7 March 2012
Lesson Two	13 March 2012	11 March 2012
Lesson Three	27 March 2012	28 March 2012
Lesson Four	3 April 2012	4 April 2012
Lesson Five	10 April 2012	11 April 2012
Lesson Six	17 April 2012	18 April 2012
Give Post-test Questionnaire	24 April 2012	25 April 2012

Table 3: Timetable for Cycle four.

6.2. Teachers' Workshop (1)

6.2.0. Aims

On 15 January 2012, to help the two art teachers who had agreed to implement the curriculum, I held a workshop in the library at School C in collaboration with my PhD supervisor. The workshop lasted two hours. The purpose was to introduce the curriculum unit to the teachers and explain their role in the action research. I prepared a workshop agenda and resources, consisting of the following: some images of *Alsadu*, a copy of a booklet about *Alsadu*, some sketchbooks, the DVD film I had already shown, examples of students' artefacts, a completed lesson report from the teacher in Cycle three and the question-answer sheet for the pre-test and post-test. I also prepared a list of titles and objectives for all the lessons and the revised plan for Lesson one in both Arabic and English.

6.2.1. Description

To begin with, I distributed the agenda to all the workshop participants (Appendix H). Then I listed my reasons for doing the research and referred them to current problems in art education in Kuwait and the overall aims of the unit. I showed images of *Alsadu* weaving in the book and displayed some student sketchbooks. Then I discussed the concept of *sketchbooks*, and explained their purposes and how to use and evaluate work in them. Next, my supervisor explained the concept and aims of *action research*, the stages in my own action research and the roles of the researcher (me) and of the teachers.

I went on to show them the list of lesson plan titles and their aims and objectives, and we studied the first lesson in detail. I showed them the DVD that I had used in class and asked them to suggest questions that could be put to students and to identify where in their schools it could be shown. We agreed that the film should be interrupted every five minutes to allow for questions and discussion.

At this point, I introduced the topic of teacher evaluation (Appendix I). I asked the teachers to evaluate the film and discussed how and when to use the lesson report form. It was important for them to understand that they were expected to use it to evaluate each lesson plan systematically and suggest ways of changing or amplifying it.

Next, I explained the purpose of the questionnaires for the students (Appendix J) and informed them that I would use it to gather data before and after the implementation. At the end I showed examples of what the students had made and decorated in my lessons in Cycle three and described the practical work they had done, the difficulties encountered and how I had evaluated their achievements. They were very interested in the examples and I regretted leaving this until last, because we ran out of time. Finally, I thanked the

teachers and I suggested that we meet again to discuss the curriculum materials in more detail.

6.2.2. Evaluation and findings

I was glad that my supervisor had encouraged me to run this workshop. Before this I had imagined that the instructions with the curriculum materials were clear so there would be no need for one. In the event, I realised that this was a mistake, and the workshop was very important for setting up parameters. I now realise that participants in collaborative curriculum developments of this kind ought to discuss the curriculum materials and their roles and responsibilities in detail before any action is taken.

On reflection, the teachers seemed interested in taking part in the project, even though the ideas were quite new to them. They said they thought they could enjoy teaching the lessons because I was encouraging them to express their own opinions and make their voice heard and they were bored with teaching the same lessons year after year. They expressed interest in playing a part in evaluating the curriculum unit and helping me assess whether action research could succeed in Kuwaiti schools. This made me think that they would respond well to the teacher-researcher role.

I was pleased by their enthusiasm and surprised at how many questions they asked about action research in general and these lessons in particular. It soon became clear that the first workshop was too short. I began to realise that they expected me to prepare on their behalf everything they would need to teach the lessons, without exception; leaving anything open for them to interpret made them uneasy. Unfortunately, they had had no chance to study the written curriculum before the workshop, because it was being revised.

I promised to send them the complete text and arrange another workshop afterwards, where any problems could be aired.

Reflecting on the workshop, I wondered if their feelings about action research might change when they started to teach the unit. Whatever their initial enthusiasm, they were about to take responsibility for a wholly new curriculum approach (including many new strategies and skills) before they had even read the lesson plans. Although teaching about the cultural heritage was an innovation in art lessons in Kuwait, I felt confident that I had included enough information about this in the notes that formed part of the introduction to the curriculum materials.

I reminded the teachers of this and asked them if they knew how to weave *Alsadu*, but none of them did. Although I was worried about this, I knew they would not need these practical skills because the weaver would visit their schools to teach them. I asked them to evaluate each lesson on a separate report form and discuss it with me afterwards, together with any recommendations for change.

By the end, I had learned a great deal about professional development workshops. I learned of their importance before any action research or educational project takes place, in communicating the main research outline, spreading the ideas, themes, procedures, and the nature of the participants' roles. I discovered that action research projects require advance preparation for team members and the value of discussion and preparatory reading.

6.3. Teachers' Workshop (2)

6.3.0. Aims

On 28 February 2012, I distributed images of *Alsadu* weaving, examples of pages of students' sketchbooks and a copy of the DVD '*Alsadu* Art of the Desert' to the teachers before the second workshop. This workshop took place in primary school B. The main aim was to give the teachers a chance to discuss any anticipated difficulties after reading the materials. I had asked them to list questions or comments in advance.

6. 3.1. Description

I began by saying that the intention was to discuss the unit in detail and our roles in the action research. I also wanted to discuss the instructional strategies and any unclear points they might have found when they read the materials. I had not planned a specific agenda, because I wanted them to share their views through questioning and discussion. We discussed the following items:

i. Purposes and uses of sketchbooks

I pointed out that sketchbooks could be used for research and to store material for reflection, including sketches, written responses to lesson experiences and notes on ideas for future artwork. The teachers took away examples of sketchbooks with work by children in UK schools, together with enough blank sketchbooks for every child in their class.

ii. The lesson plans

We discussed the objectives in the lesson plans and some practical details of teacher preparation, including how to secure permission to take school parties to *Alsadu House Museum*, how to negotiate with the weaver to collaborate in the museum and in class; and the resources needed for the lessons (images, students' looms and materials).

iii. Evaluating student learning

I showed the teachers more examples of sketchbooks and asked them to evaluate the information that students had recorded in them and assess how well they had developed their ideas. I also discussed how to determine student achievement in terms of learning outcomes (from classroom discussions, homework and sketchbooks) and how to evaluate the students' weaving skills.

However, it was clear from their questions that the teachers had not read the curriculum materials and they had no comments to give on the teachers' notes or lesson plans. I was very perturbed by this and reminded them that their participation demanded serious commitment and hard work from us all.

6.3.2. Evaluation of workshops

The workshops convinced me that art teachers in Kuwait must always be introduced to syllabus reforms via workshops before they put them into practice. In this case one additional workshop or more should have been dedicated to the use of sketchbooks so as to develop students' practical skills in art. This could usefully have been led by an artist or expert teacher who could demonstrate how to use sketchbooks in an exploratory way. The following key points emerged from my evaluation:

- Although they seemed interested at first, the teachers admitted to feeling apprehensive about teaching the unit, probably because they had not read the teachers' notes. It was clear that introducing so many innovations at once ran the risk of unsettling Kuwaiti teachers and students.
- In the first workshop I was surprised that the teachers asked so many questions about action research in general, the lesson plans and the curriculum unit as a whole. In the second workshop, I was also surprised, but saddened, to realise that they not read the notes in my introduction to the curriculum materials and wondered why they had not maintained the same level of interest. They did not ask any questions, despite their promise to adopt the dual roles of teacher/researcher on which action research depends.
- In the first workshop, when I had prepared an agenda they seemed comfortable with their teaching and research roles. I suspect they had not read the curriculum materials before the second workshop because this seemed like too much hard work. At this point I became seriously worried about the value of their contribution.

I had expected to learn more about the problems of applying this curriculum in Kuwaiti schools from these teachers' questions in the second workshop. I expected some findings and surprises to emerge at this point and that my classroom observations would uncover still more. I anticipated being able to judge whether the teachers' initial enthusiasm for teaching the cultural heritage had been sustained, what the term *culture* meant to them; whether or not they thought it was important to teach this concept in schools and if the curriculum unit was likely to succeed with other teachers and students. The more they suggested additions or changes to lesson plans, the more this would help me to determine the curriculum unit's weaknesses and strengths.

To conclude, I learned a great deal from the workshops about team work in action research. I realised that researchers like me should not expect the same responses from each teacher. Teachers who are prepared to work very hard to introduce a new approach are rare, in particular when they are not paid for doing extra work. Most importantly, I learned that it is important to set up a sufficient number of professional development sessions in advance to ensure that team members all know what is required of them and what the project entails.

6.4.0. Observation and Evaluation of Lessons

6.4.1. Lesson one: ‘Understanding the lifestyle in the desert’.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. `Acquire brief historical information about Kuwait from a documentary film.
2. Learn about the natural environment in Kuwait and the basic character of life in the desert.
3. Learn about the environmental impact of the desert on people’s lives over time.
4. Learn that people there have made crafts for a very long time.
5. Learn how to distinguish natural from man-made objects from the past.
6. Learn how people who made these things used natural objects and the materials around them.
7. Begin to appreciate crafts and their importance to their makers.
8. Learn the value of desert resources and their relevance for people in the past.

Description: School B

On March 6, 2012, I observed the first lesson of the unit in school B. There were 25 female students, aged 10-11, mostly Kuwaiti nationals, but three were Egyptian, one was Saudi Arabian and one came from Sudan.

The regular teacher had written the lesson title, broad objectives and vocabulary on the board and had brought the sketchbooks I had supplied to class. The seating was arranged in a U formation.

To begin with, the teacher introduced me and explained I would be visiting for a few weeks while she implemented a new curriculum unit about Kuwaiti culture. The lessons would focus on art history and they would be investigating traditional artefacts –*Alsadu* weaving. Next, she introduced the sketchbooks and quickly explained how to use them. This caused some confusion. She explained their purpose, outlined some possible uses and showed examples of pages in the sketchbooks I had given her. She continued to give guidance on using them ‘properly’, stressing that they should take care of them and write down their name, the date, lesson title and vocabulary each time they used them.

Then she introduced the exercise, ‘What if you had lived in the desert?’ She tried to encourage the students to think about what people’s lives were like in the past, by asking them to imagine and appreciate differences from today. The students clearly thought life in the desert life must have been hard, because one commented, ‘I could not live without a supermarket or shops’ and another said ‘Living without electricity must be hard’.

Before she showed the film on a big screen, the teacher asked the students to write down afterwards what they had learned (Figure 19). The film ran for ten minutes, before she stopped and discussed it, and they seemed to enjoy watching it. I noticed that most students answered her questions correctly and the discussion was lively. The procedure was the same for the second half. I noticed that most students only drew in their sketchbooks, until the teacher asked them to write in them as well.



Figure 19: Students writing and drawing after watching the film.

Next, she showed supplementary photographs of the desert and *Alsadu* crafts, to provoke discussion. She described the desert conditions, the nature of the materials, the resources and making things by hand. They had absorbed and retained more information from the film than I expected; they noted, for instance, that, ‘They (the weavers) used their sheep’s wool and the desert plants to colour the wool’; that ‘They called the women who could weave well *Aldafra*’ and, ‘Later they used industrial dyes which are not fixed’.

At the end of this lesson the students were fully prepared for next week’s visit to the *House of Alsadu* and appeared enthusiastic. The teacher explained the purpose of the visit, what they should do there and the worksheets.

Teacher evaluation

The teacher analysed and evaluated the lesson with me after completing the report form. I wrote notes about the issues that we covered.

- The teacher reported that she had been confused during the part of the lesson where she had to explain the content and strategies for the curriculum unit. By the end of the lesson, however, she said 'I felt comfortable about my teaching'. I was not surprised she felt like this, when these things were unfamiliar.
- She thought that the lesson objectives had been achieved. She felt that the students had derived a good deal of information both from the film and from herself and I agreed. The knowledge they had absorbed from the film and through discussion was accurate.
- The teacher also thought that using sketchbooks was a successful strategy for acquiring knowledge about art and culture. I agreed, having noted that they were being used appropriately for sketches and information.
- The teacher reported that the students had spent about ten minutes writing down the lesson vocabulary. I suggested it would save time in future to list and distribute the vocabulary items on a worksheet.
- The teacher said that she had thought beforehand that the lesson contained too much information, but the students had absorbed more than she had expected. I thought she was probably surprised because she was used to teaching practical skills only. I agreed that the students had absorbed more historical knowledge than usual, but this demonstrated that they could learn anything so long as a teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies and resources.

Researcher's reflection

- I concluded that the organisation of the content and timing had been successful. The teacher followed the lesson plan and remembered to interrupt the video for questions, which seemed to prevent boredom.

- She had prepared the lesson well, which helped to ensure its success. She ran through the film beforehand, showed it on a big screen and tested the sound level, to everyone's benefit.
 - At first, most of the students used the sketchbooks for drawing but not writing, I did not expect them to change their assumptions about the purpose of a sketchbook in the first lesson.
 - I concluded that asking students to write down the vocabulary for the lesson was a good way of making sure that they remembered the meaning of the words.
- However, in my experience as a teacher in Kuwait, students in art classes in primary schools do not expect to write anything at all. I wondered if these students had adopted this new requirement willingly and would draw on it in future.

Ultimately, I concluded that most of the students had learned a great deal and had enjoyed the lesson. Moreover, they were clearly excited about the planned trip. I very much enjoyed observing this lesson and was surprised how much they learned.

Description: School C

On 7th March 2012, I observed the first lesson of the curriculum unit being taught at primary school C. The class of 10-11-year-olds was larger than usual. Thirty-two students, all Kuwaiti nationals, were present, out of a total of 35. The seats were arranged in a circle, so that some students could not see the board. The teacher had prepared for the lesson by writing the title, broad objectives and required vocabulary on the board. She had also prepared the audio visual equipment, some sketchbooks to use as examples and some images of *Alsadu* materials. I brought 32 new sketchbooks with me to distribute to the students.

To begin with, she had to quiet some talkative students. She continued, ‘As I said, today we will begin a new curriculum unit, to help you to increase your understanding of Kuwaiti culture by studying *Alsadu* weaving and traditional artefacts’. Then she introduced them to the idea of sketchbooks, explaining their purpose and use in art lessons. In my view she did not describe this new teaching resource thoroughly enough; her account was rather rushed, given that it was a new learning tool for her students. She showed them examples of sketchbooks but held them too far away from the students to display them clearly. Then she asked each student to take a new one and write her name and the lesson vocabulary in it. They took 15 minutes to do this. It was difficult for those who were not facing the board to read the vocabulary and then turn round to write it down. Even the students facing the board were too far away to read the words clearly, so they asked the teacher to read them aloud and this added to the time required.

After this, the teacher started the main part of the lesson by asking, ‘What if you had lived in the desert in the past?’ Some students responded as follows: ‘The darkness makes it difficult to live in the desert, the heat would not have been reduced by air conditioning and the desert at that time did not contain anything interesting’.

The teacher announced that she would show the film ‘*Alsadu* Art of the Desert’ and asked them again to write notes in their sketchbooks about what they learned from it. She used a projector with a large screen, but the sound was poor; thus, not all the students could hear everything and the seating arrangement did not help. Some students who were sitting at the back had to stand, in an effort to see the film better.

After ten minutes, she stopped the film and questioned the class about what they had seen. Most students gave correct answers but a few did not take part, perhaps because they had not been able to hear or see the information. To make matters worse, in the middle of the film, the school bell malfunctioned, ringing for seven minutes without stopping. To my

surprise, the teacher did not halt the film. During the question and discussion, I noted that nineteen students had written down some historical and cultural information in their sketchbooks (Figure 20).

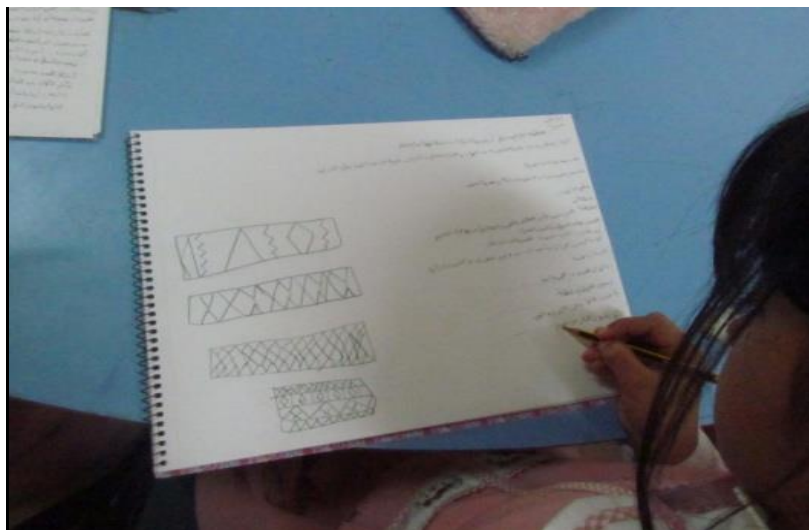


Figure 20: Student work in a sketchbook.

Next, the teacher asked a few more questions while she showed some photographs of *Alsadu*, but the students did not react. She did not add more information at this point, though expected to do so; consequently, the students had to rely on the video for ideas. When she asked them, ‘What are the best types of wool?’ one student answered correctly, ‘Goats’ wool’, but the teacher said ‘No, that is the wrong answer’, to which the student replied that this information came from the film. At this point I began to suspect that the teacher had not read my notes in the curriculum unit. I had expected her to give them more information during the discussion, but she did not.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher told the class that next time they would go to the *Alsadu House Museum* to look at its collection. She appropriately described the purpose of the visit and what they should do there, showed them the worksheets and explained how to complete them. The students seemed excited about this visit.

Teacher evaluation

Afterwards I discussed the following points about the lesson and its aims with the teacher.

- The teacher thought there was too much vocabulary for the students to learn.
When I asked her which words might be deleted, she had no suggestions. In my view they were all quite simple for of this age group and in the end we agreed to retain them all.
- The teacher thought all the lesson objectives had been achieved, except for one: 'Learn how to distinguish natural from man-made objects from the past'. She told me she had not mentioned this, because she thought it was difficult for students to understand; I agreed.
- We agreed that the circular arrangement of the chairs would have to change in future, mainly because the students would be working in small groups.

Researcher's reflection

- I concluded that the students had not gathered enough information from the film because of: (i) the poor seating arrangements; (ii) the dim sound and (iii) the noise of the bell.
- The teacher had not read through the curriculum materials properly and could not supplement the details in the film because she was not adequately prepared; moreover she gave out incorrect information.
- Some students did not understand how to use their sketchbooks. I had expected the teacher to help them more and it was clear that they needed more guidance if they were going to use them to the full.

I was disappointed with this lesson, for many reasons. However, since it was only the first lesson of six, I hoped for better results and some progress later.

6.4.2. Lesson two: ‘Investigating and documenting artefacts in the museum’.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. Practise organising and presenting visual and verbal information in a sketchbook and talking about artefacts.
2. Consider how Bedouin people’s limited resources were used in their crafts.
3. Understand that each piece of *Alsadu* weaving has its own meaning and function.

Description: School B

On Tuesday 13th March 2012, the teacher took 24 students to *Alsadu House Museum* and I accompanied them as observer. On the journey she handed out vocabulary sheets, asking the students to stick them into their sketchbooks with glue which she supplied, and then to read them. Next, she reminded them what to do in the museum and how to answer the questions on the worksheets. In addition, she warned them not to take photographs of the collection, but only of their chosen artefact and only after completing the worksheets. I thought she and the students were well prepared for the visit and were impressed by her use of the journey time. We arrived at 10:30 am and found the weaver waiting for us in an empty workshop. The teacher repeated her instructions and distributed the worksheets (Appendix F). Then the teacher and weaver took the students around the museum and the weaver talked about some *Alsadu* artefacts; for example, she informed told them the names, functions, materials and age of these items (Figure 21).



Figure 21: Studentstouring the museum.

Many students asked how they had been used, how to date them and whether the colours had come from natural or chemical dyes. I noted that they recorded the weaver's words and drew sketches of some artefacts. They seemed interested and asked pertinent questions. Next, the teacher asked the students to choose one artefact to study in detail for the next 30 minutes.

I noted that each student went directly to an artefact and sat or stood close to it (Figure 22).

Some of them observed that it was hard to tell which dyes were natural and which were chemical and hard to date them. The weaver helped them to answer many of the questions on the worksheets. I did not notice anyone finding it difficult to investigate the artefacts.



Figure 22: Students examining *Alsadu* artefacts.

Once the students were seated in small groups in the workshop, each one was asked to tell the others in her group what she had discovered and answer their questions.

As they did so, the teacher walked around. I noticed students in one group sharing photographs of their chosen artefacts and that this had enriched the information in their sketchbooks. The group discussions took 10 minutes, followed by another 10-minute whole-class discussion, intended to consolidate the information that they had gathered. I found the discussions fruitful. They exchanged useful information and had clearly benefited from the weaver's guidance and background knowledge (Figure 23).



Figure 23: Whole class discussion.

They remembered everything she had said and brought it into their discussion. I noted that they had begun to organise visual images and verbal descriptions of them in their sketchbooks and the discussions showed that they could use the specialist vocabulary.

On returning to school, the teacher gave each student the two blank cards for homework (see the instructions mentioned in Chapter Five). She told them that these cards would feature in an information game in the next lesson and that, if they did not bring them, they would not be able to join in.

The students appeared happy at the end of the visit and I heard one of them say to the teacher, ‘We got a lot of information out of that and we enjoyed this school trip’.

Teacher evaluation

When we returned to school, the teacher and I met to analyse and evaluate this lesson.

Our discussion revolved around the following points:

- The teacher liked using the worksheets to guide the students in finding out about artefacts. She said that the questions, such as ‘How old do you think this it is?’ and ‘What do it and other artefacts tell us about the people who made them, their culture and their society?’ encouraged them to think about art history and culture. Although worksheets are not widely used in Kuwait, her response confirmed my hypothesis that they are an effective learning tool.
- The teacher liked the strategy of a museum visit. Studying a collection was a good way of teaching art history and the concept of culture in her view. But she pointed out that the weaver had contributed hugely to the learning because of her experience and knowledge of the exhibits. Without her, the students would have found the tasks in the lesson much more difficult to complete.

Researcher’s reflection

- Many students used their I-Pads, I-Phones and cameras to take pictures of the artefacts in this museum visit. Some students did not draw their chosen object at all and said that they preferred to wait until they could use coloured pencils at home. Some of those who showed photographs to their groups reported that they liked using digital photography in this way.
- The teacher had prepared thoroughly for this lesson and I was impressed by her good use of the journey time. Her preparation covered all the objectives and she had allowed enough time in the museum for detailed investigation and study.
- I concluded that investigating and discussing *Alsadu* artefacts in this way had resulted in a good deal being learned about Bedouin culture and the desert environment. As noted in Chapter Two, according to Greer (1987), the two main approaches to studying artworks in art history are historical and contextual. The

former considers the social and personal influences on their creation while the latter considers the works of art and artists in terms of their culture. For the curriculum unit I had decided to adopt the second approach. By the end of this lesson, I was even more convinced that this approach was useful. I noticed that the students had learned from studying the *Alsadu* artefacts how the Bedouin people lived in the Kuwaiti desert, what materials they used, what crafts they practised and many other things about their culture.

Description: School C

On Sunday, 11 March 2012, the teacher in School C took 29 students to the museum and I accompanied them. On the bus, she teacher distributed some printouts of the key vocabulary items for the lesson, as listed in the lesson plan; she asked them to paste these in their sketchbooks and then read and learn them.

We arrived at exactly 10:00 am and found the weaver waiting for us ready to take up her role of educator and tell the students about the museum collection. No other schools were visiting and the gallery was free for our use at this time. When we entered the workshop, I asked the teacher to start the lesson there, but she told me that she had not brought the lesson plan with her and surprised me by saying that she thought she simply needed to distribute the worksheets and then let the students investigate the artefacts by themselves. I asked her if she had read the plan for Lesson two and she said that she had not. I was confused. I did not understand how she could start to teach without some idea of the lesson plan. I must confess that this shocked and disappointed me, because at the close of the previous lesson I had made a point of asking her to prepare for this one. Fortunately, I had brought a copy of the plan with me, which I gave to her. Using this, she began the lesson by asking the students to sit in the floor in a U formation. She

reminded them what they had to do and when they could take photographs and distributed the worksheets.

Next, the weaver and the teacher took the students on a tour (Figure 24).



Figure 24: The students and weaver touring the museum.

The weaver told the students about the *Alsadu* artefacts in the same way as before, and responded to their questions. I thought that they asked good questions, such as ‘Why is the *Qata* so long?’ or ‘How long does it take to weave this artefact?’ and ‘How old is this artefact?’ During the tour, which took twenty minutes, I noticed some students photographing the collection and realised that this was distracting them from listening to the weaver. The teacher asked them not to do this until later.

Following this, the teacher asked the students to start finding out more about which ever artefact most interested them. Each student chose an artefact and began to study it and write down the answers to the questions on her worksheets. I mentioned that they could ask the weaver if they ran into any difficulty. Most of them asked her about the age of their artefact. I noticed that, while this was going on, the teacher was walking around to make sure that all the students were working on this task.

After 30 minutes of individual investigation, the students were organised into five small groups to spend 10 minutes sharing their findings about their chosen objects. As the students did this, they looked at their drawings and discussed what they had learned, and the teacher walked around listening (Figure 25). I was pleased to hear one student say to her group, ‘I studied a *Hodaj*, which is a camel litter used by a bride when they brought her from her family home to her husband’s house and also for carrying old women when they travelled’. Another said,

I studied an *Alkhurj*, which was a saddlebag used to carry essential items. It was made of sheep’s wool, dyed in many colours, such as red, black, beige and white. It has pockets at the side and a coarse texture.



Figure 25: Group discussion.

These presentations were followed by a 10-minute whole-class discussion in which the teacher augmented the information supplied by the weaver and the students’ findings. She mentioned the materials, sizes, patterns, meanings and function of *Alsadu* and its role in Kuwaiti culture and society. I noted that the students had recorded on their worksheets and in their sketchbooks the useful contextual information that the weaver had provided

during the tour. One student had written, ‘The Bedouin family divided the tent by the *Qata*, to isolate the women’s council from the men’s council, because they lived in the same tent’.

When we returned to the school, the teacher gave each student two blank cards and asked them to do the homework in the same way as before.

Teacher evaluation

After the lesson, the teacher and I met to analyse and evaluate it. We discussed the following matters:

- The teacher said that she liked the idea of printing out the lesson vocabulary in advance and distributing it to the students, so as to gain extra teaching time. I agreed that this was helpful, most of all when the class is relatively large. We decided to follow this arrangement in all subsequent lessons.
- The teacher said that her students had benefited from the museum visit, chiefly from investigating the artefacts at firsthand, rather than from reproductions. She thought that the worksheet questions had increased their understanding of art concepts and helped them to investigate works of art. Having watched them studying the artefacts and completing their worksheets, I felt that this evaluation made sense. But the information they had gathered also represented aspects of their cultural heritage.
- The teacher said that the timing for each lesson activity was appropriate: 30 minutes for investigating the artefacts, 10 minutes for group discussion and 10 minutes for whole-class discussion. The students had had enough time to finish each task – their worksheets their group discussion and their whole-class

discussion– and there was enough time for the teacher to establish the main points of the lesson.

- She liked the idea of using the digital camera as a research tool, although this meant that the students did not draw their artefacts. She suggested that they complete this work at home. I had observed some students using their digital cameras to record data and showing each other the images of their chosen artefacts during the group discussion. Other students had spent most of their time gathering written information.

Researcher's reflection

- I realised that the role of the weavers, who are the last remaining practitioners of traditional weaving, was essential in the lessons based at *Alsadu House Museum*. Since many exhibits had no labels, there was no other way for students to ascertain important contextual details about exhibits such as their age. The absence of curators or museum educators trained in art history and of labels was mitigated by the students' being able to ask the weaver questions about the history of the exhibits, some of which she could answer. Although I had secured her help for this research. I realised that, in future, teachers would have to do this for themselves. It was necessary to consider how to deal with this.
- The teacher had mistakenly believed she did not need the lesson plan and that, once inside the museum, the students would simply study artefacts and complete the worksheets by themselves. In my view this lack of planning typifies existing practice in museum visits in Kuwait. In my experience, students only look at exhibits and do not do any research and this may explain the failure of this teacher to read the lesson plan in advance. Had she done so, she would have known that

she needed to lead discussions about the artefacts and provide some cultural/contextual knowledge.

- I concluded that the tour was helpful in orientating the students and preparing them to study an artefact. I noted that it gave them an idea about the collection as a whole and helped them to decide what to choose. They also gained some sense of the museum's significance from the weaver's general description.

At the end of this evaluation, I realised that all the above points must be acted on if the museum visits were going to succeed in enhancing the students' view of the nation's history and culture.

6.4.3. Lesson three: 'Talking about and presenting artefacts'.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. Improve their ability to talk about crafts.
2. Describe, analyse and interpret crafts from the past.
3. Develop art vocabulary.
4. Learn to respect each other's opinions when sharing ideas with classmates and teachers.

Description: School B

On 27 March 2012, I went to primary school B to observe Lesson three. The teacher had prepared for it by writing the title and vocabulary on the board. After the students had copied these, the teacher asked them to raise their hands if they had brought in the homework. Since only eleven out of twenty-three students responded, it was plain that more than half the class had not done it, even though she had emphasised that it was essential for this lesson.

The class was split into five groups, with four or five students in each. The teacher distributed those who had no cards around the groups. Then she explained how to start the information game and asked the students without cards to write notes and draw in their sketchbooks. I was obliged to intervene when she said, 'Each student in the group lays both cards in front of them and one by one reads their cards'. I explained that each student had to lay on the table the card with the drawing of the artefact and hide the one with the written information. Then she gave them the correct instruction and added that they would play the 'information card game' for ten minutes.

While she was doing this, I walked around listening to the students' discussions and took photos of their sketchbooks. They had written down some useful information and drawn each other's artefacts. They seemed to enjoy doing this; they listened to each speaker and recorded what she was saying. If they missed anything, they asked her to repeat it. It seemed that everyone was absorbed in the game (Figure 26).



Figure 26: Students recording information and sketching.

After ten minutes, all the groups had finished and the teacher asked the students to make brief presentations to the whole class. She gave them one minute to present their findings and the others were encouraged to ask them questions afterwards. As each one made her presentation, the teacher showed the class, wherever possible, an image of the artefact concerned. The images that I had provided for this purpose included *Basat* (rugs), *Masanid* (cushions), *Alkhurj* (saddlebags) and *Qata* (tent dividers).

The presentations took around thirty minutes. I noted that each presenter communicated her research findings and the other students wrote this information in their sketchbooks as well as they could. I was pleased to see that they supplied each other with useful contextual information about art and culture. One student said “I investigated *Basat*; this was a rug used to cover the ground on which people sat, since at this time there was no furniture. Their life was very simple”. She went on to describe the colours, shape and texture of the *Basat*.

Then the teacher thanked the groups and started a class discussion lasting ten minutes about *Alsadu* materials and designs (motifs, patterns and colours) and their functions and meanings. She used the teachers’ notes for this and showed some images of *Alsadu* craft work that I had provided. It seemed to me, from their answers and the sketchbooks, that the students had gained valuable contextual information about the artefacts in this way.

Finally the teacher organised a practical activity similar to mine. She used a punch to make two holes in each group’s cards, one at the top and one at the bottom and asked the students to string them together with woollen thread, like beads in a necklace. This took around ten minutes. At the end, she collected the cards and hung them on a large wooden frame which became a resource containing all the information they had collected about *Alsadu* artefacts.

Teacher evaluation

Directly after the lesson, the teacher evaluated it and we discussed the following points:

- She was somewhat concerned that the curriculum unit required students to do homework after an art lesson. She reported that they did not see the need to do this and that it was the first time she had ever set any. She suggested that the homework should be done in class, to make sure that everyone completed it, I could not agree with her. I knew that this was an unusual request, but considered it important to try to persuade students to take art classes more seriously. I had included the homework partly to give students more time to review what they had explored in the museum and also to try to change their present view and that of their parents: that art is not a serious school subject.
- The teacher liked the information card game and the students' presentations. She said that the students found the game interesting and she had enjoyed it too. Moreover, the ones who had not brought cards were disappointed about not being able to contribute. I agreed. For example, I heard one student asking the teacher 'If I bring my cards next lesson, can I play the game and present my artefact?' It was clear that the teacher liked my ideas for this lesson, even though they were unusual for Kuwaiti primary schools.
- She commented that the students had already acquired a great deal of information about *Alsadu* artefacts in previous lessons. I agreed that they had learned some art history.
- The teacher said that she was surprised at the amount that the students had learned by means of the game, their presentations and the subsequent teacher-led discussion. I was not so surprised because I do not view the acquisition of knowledge as dependent on the amount of information provided by the teacher. More student-centred learning strategies can have a significant impact on learning. These students had been presented with factual

contextual and historical knowledge in interesting ways and had not realised how much they were absorbing.

Researcher's reflection

After consulting my notes, it was clear the teacher had provided sound information about the *Alsadu* materials, designs, functions, meanings and the people who used them. After the game and the students' presentations, she tried to open the discussion to the whole class. She was very versatile and I enjoyed watching her try out the different lesson strategies in what seemed to be an effortless way, as reflected in her treatment of her students. She used a range of appropriate strategies from the curriculum unit and was successful in effecting student learning. When I realised that she had misunderstood how the game should be played, however, I explained it to her without delay. I could see that teachers face difficulties using new curriculum materials and, once again, this alerted me to the need to organise teacher workshops in advance. The teacher concluded her evaluation by saying that this lesson had some successful points and she hoped that the students would get used to doing homework for art classes. She thought that learning about *Alsadu* artefacts might contribute to their understanding and appreciation of Kuwaiti culture and the nature of Bedouin society.

Description: School C

On 28 March 2012, I observed Lesson three in School C. I entered the art class before the students had arrived and noticed that the seating was the same as in the previous lesson. So I spoke to the teacher and we re-arranged it in five circles such that all the students could see the board. Twenty-eight students attended and there were four absentees.

To begin with, the teacher distributed the lesson vocabulary items on sheets of paper and asked the students to read them, once they had stuck them into the sketchbooks. Then she started the lesson by asking them about the homework. Only sixteen students had completed this. I noticed that two students had printed the photos of the artefacts which they had studied at the museum.

The teacher organised the students into groups of five or six and distributed the ones without homework cards among them. She introduced the 'information card game' and told the students without cards to listen and record information. When the students started to play the game, they got very excited. I noticed that those who were onlookers were starting to fill up their sketchbooks. They seemed to be enjoying themselves. They were all busy, with everyone either participating or recording information and it did not seem as if the large number of students was a problem. The groups exchanged information about the *qata*, *hodaj*, *masnid*, *basat*, *alkhurj* and other artefacts in the museum. As the game proceeded, the teacher and I walked around, listening to their discussions (Figure 27).



Figure 27: Students playing the information game.

When they had finished, the teacher asked the students with cards to make presentations to the whole class and answer questions about their artefacts. As before, they did this for one minute each (Figure 28). One student described her artefact thus:

It has different designs composed of various shapes, triangles, lines, representations of camels and dots; the artefact is made up of different shapes and colours.



Figure 28: Student presentation.

While they were speaking, the teacher showed the whole class an image of each item, if she had one. Then it was the teacher's turn to provide extra information about the materials, designs, symbolism and functions of the *Alsadu* artefacts.

The results clearly showed that the students gained a good deal of information about *Alsadu* artefacts and the people who made and used them. For example, when the teacher asked what the *qata*, were used for, a student said, 'They were used to divide the tents into sections, allowing the Bedouin community to separate the men from the women, because at the time it was forbidden for men to sit with women'. One student's answer to the teacher's question about patterns caught my attention; she said, 'the weavers often

used the triangle motif in their work, which indicates uniformity'. Another student answered differently: 'they used snake motifs in their artefacts'. This surprised the teacher, who looked at me. I confirmed that this was correct and explained that this pattern was called the 'snake path'. This information was included in the teachers' notes.

At the end, the teacher asked each group to collect all the cards and join them together; she made holes at the top and bottom of each one and showed the students how to thread them on a length of wool, so they could hang them inside a large wooden frame. They called this the '*Alsadu* artefact frame'; this idea was also included in the lesson plan in the curriculum unit.

Teacher evaluation

After the lesson, the teacher and I evaluated it together. We discussed the following issues:

- The teacher was surprised how much information the students had gained through discussion. She had noticed how well they respected each other's opinions in their presentations and went on to say, 'I have never seen this level of activity and vitality in my students'. I too was pleased with their participation in the lesson. I had witnessed all the students without exception making an effort and concluded that its success was due to the teaching/learning strategies.
- The teacher suggested that the reason some students had not done the homework was that they were not convinced of its importance or used to her setting any. She said that students in general think that the drawing and painting in art lessons is only done for fun. This confirmed my view that art lessons are not considered as important as other school subjects in Kuwait.

- The teacher liked the idea of students learning from each other in the information game and from the presentations. In fact, the homework cards contributed to the learning in this lesson in four different ways: (i) as homework, to summarise their findings about *Alsadu* artefacts; (ii) as a way of sharing their ideas when playing the game in groups; (iii) in the presentations, to spread their findings to the whole class; and (iv) to summarise the learning when they were made into a group artwork.

Researcher's reflection

- I realised that the seating arrangements and the distance between student tables can have a significant impact on group work. The ideal arrangement enables all the students to participate in debate and face the teacher and this has a positive influence on participation and focuses the attention of the class. Hence, the organisation of the classroom is a key factor affecting the acquisition of knowledge.
- The teacher had provided the students with some useful information, but had not covered everything in the lesson plan. I suspected that she had not read the teacher's notes and this was confirmed after class, when we checked a student's answer together. I suggested that she ought to prepare more thoroughly for her role and provide students with more information.

At the end of the evaluation, I thanked the teacher and told her that I would continue to reflect on the issues she had raised.

6.4.4. Lesson four: ‘Meeting a weaver and starting to weave’.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. Learn how to weave from a woman weaver who practises a traditional craft.
2. Understand and be able to practise the basic characteristics of the traditional art of weaving, learn how to use traditional craft materials and set up and weave on a simple loom and think about women’s roles in traditional Kuwaiti society and today.
3. Consolidate/reflect on what they had learned about *Alsadu* materials and techniques.
4. Learn about *Alsadu* in the past as a way of coming to know another time and place.

Description: School B

On 3 April 2012, I observed Lesson four at school B. There were 25 students and no absentees. The class was organised into five groups each of five students.

After the teacher had given out the vocabulary sheets, she asked the students to stick them into their sketchbooks and then read them. She linked the lesson with the previous one by questions about what they had learned and asked them if they would like to meet a woman who wove artefacts like those in the museum. Then she asked them if they knew any *Alsadu* weaving techniques. All the students answered “No”. She announced that they were going to meet a professional weaver and asked them to suggest questions to put to her. She waited one minute while the students wrote down questions in their sketchbooks. The students looked excited. They exclaimed “yay!” when she told them about meeting the weaver.

After the teacher introduced the weaver to the class, she started to tell stories about her weaving and training and about women’s roles in traditional Bedouin society, *Alsadu* craft materials past and present and her artefacts and life. She showed the students some

of the natural materials used in weaving and, once she had reassured them that they had been washed, they handled them. After this, the students asked her whatever questions they wanted to. I noted that they wrote extracts and quotations from the weaver's answers in their sketchbooks and sketched the craft materials. I noted also that, in her talk, the weaver communicated the same information about her craft as before.

The students asked good questions. One of them was 'Do you find weaving hard or easy?' Another was, 'How can you tell the age of an *Alsadu* artefact, if it's old or new?' She answered that she found weaving easy and had started to weave at an early age, when she was only ten. She had learned it from her aunt and grandmother. To the second question she replied that she could tell the age of an *Alsadu* artefact from its colour and texture.

After this discussion, the weaver joined one of the groups, with the students arranged all around her. She showed them how to set up a simple loom with a wooden frame and went on to teach them how to make the warp and weft, not stopping until they knew how to do this (Figure 29). The students asked her about every step, but she did not seem to mind repeating the same things. They appeared excited by the idea of weaving by themselves and quickly went back to their seats to begin.



Figure 29: Weaver teaching students how to make the wrap and weft.

At this point, the teacher distributed the looms which were already set up and provided each group with a worksheet that I had prepared with instructions for preparing a warp and weft for flat weaving. She told the students to follow the steps on the worksheet and ask the weaver for help if they got into difficulties. The students enthusiastically started to weave and soon everyone was busily engaged. I saw some students refer to the worksheet, while others relied on what they had seen the weaver do. The teacher, who had herself learned how to weave by this time, also helped the students and this eased the burden on the weaver.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher called for attention and asked the class what they had felt like, whether they had liked weaving or not and if they had found it easy or difficult. I was glad to see that all their answers were positive. One student said, 'It was easy, but I need to focus during my weaving' and a second said, 'Easy, but needs more time'. I concluded that they had enjoyed it, because they wanted to complete their work. The teacher told them the lesson was over now but they could complete their weaving next

time. They seemed pleased about this and said that they wanted to see what their work would look like in its final form.

It was clear that the students needed more class time to weave because no-one had finished when the class ended.

Teacher evaluation

The teacher and I met directly after class to evaluate the lesson plan.

- The teacher commented that introducing a weaver to the class was unusual but said it was a very good idea. We agreed that the students liked it and had seemed excited to get this opportunity. They had asked some interesting questions and had learned the basics of *Alsadu* weaving at firsthand. I knew that this strategy is not normally followed in Kuwaiti schools, although, as Chapman says (1987), it always greatly helps students to learn art directly from a person of wide experience.
- The teacher made the point that in future teachers ought to know how to weave *Alsadu* in case the weaver is absent or overwhelmed with appeals from students for help. This problem with the curriculum design became evident in this lesson. The participation of a teacher with the requisite skills was clearly a good thing, and proved to be useful for students needing practical assistance in learning the techniques.
- We agreed that more time was needed to complete the practical element, since no one had finished. I realised that it would have been good if the students could have finished the flat weaving in this lesson before they learned a pattern in the next one.

Researcher's reflection

- I decided that it would be helpful if the museum collaborated with schools in future so as to enable teachers to establish contact with the weavers, discuss teaching methods and determine what could be done to improve school visits. Hitherto, I had interacted with the weaver in all the planning; for example, we had decided what she should do on the first school visit and what information and topics she should discuss with students; we had also agreed the dates of her visit and discussed other practical details. I realised that cooperation between the museum and schools was essential in future to ensure that the curriculum model was disseminated more widely.
- The evidence from the observations of lessons so far pointed to the importance of students' absorbing contextual knowledge about the historical and cultural context of *Alsadu* in the way advocated by Greer (1987), to help them better understand Kuwaiti culture and society.
- The evidence from this lesson, as far as I could tell, suggested that preparing a simple loom with a wooden frame for the students in advance did not save much lesson time.

At the end of the evaluation, we concluded that the students seemed to have consolidated their previous learning about women's roles in traditional society and the function of *Alsadu* and its materials and techniques, while they learned to flat weave. However, all the other points mentioned above needed to be taken into consideration.

Description: School C

On 4 April 2012, I observed the same lesson, in School C. The number of students attending was 28. To begin with, the teacher distributed the lesson vocabulary sheets and asked the students to paste them in their sketchbooks and read them. After she had questioned them about the learning from the last lesson, she asked whether they would like to meet a professional weaver.

Then she told them, ‘in this lesson we will meet a weaver, listen to her story about the craft of *Alsadu* and discuss with her the proper tools and functions of this work and her attitude to weaving – if she likes doing it or not’. She went on to say that they would also be taught how to weave. She said she hoped they would write down questions for the weaver so that they could learn from her and gave them a minute to do so before the weaver arrived.

Then she introduced the weaver, who told stories about her craft and introduced contextual information much as she had done before. This time, however, she discussed in detail the entire process of shearing and the different types of wool. She told them, ‘the shearing was done by the men’ who ‘sheared the animals at the end of the spring season’. She spent time showing the students some of the natural materials used in weaving, such as sheep’s and lambs’ wool, camel’s hair and natural dyes and mentioned that it was safe to touch them, as they had been washed beforehand.

The students learned about her training, as well as the materials used in *Alsadu* and their sources, and asked her personal questions, such as ‘When you were young, did you find weaving easy and fun?’ She told them ‘I was used to weaving, so found it easy. I really found it fun, because I liked to help my family’. The weaver demonstrated how to make the warp and weft and weave a flat *Alsadu*. She sat with one group and the others stood

around her and watched what she was doing. She told them how to set up the loom, make the warp and weft and finally, how to make a flat weavedesign.

Following this, the teacher distributed the assembled looms to all the students, at the same time handing out the worksheets with practical instructions. She told them to follow the steps and ask for the weaver's help if they ran into difficulties. I noticed that the students found it difficult to begin with, but did not see many of them using the worksheets. They mostly asked the weaver to help them. The teacher learned to weave from watching the weaver and joined her in helping the students when they ran into difficulties. She said to me, "I get it! I've learned how to weave" (Figure 30).



Figure 30: Students' weaving.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked the students whether they had enjoyed weaving *Alsadu* and would like to weave again. They answered 'Yes'. One student said, 'At first I found it difficult, but when I tried and concentrated on the work I found it easy'. A second one said, 'I really liked it and enjoyed myself today because I learned a new craft;' and a

third said, 'The weaving taught me how to be patient'. The teacher told them they would learn more about the craft of weaving in the next lesson.

Teacher evaluation

When Lesson four finished, the teacher and I sat down to discuss it.

- The teacher thought that the students seemed greatly interested to meet the weaver and that she had provided useful information. I agreed that she had done this in an interesting way.
- The teacher said that she had not expected her students to weave so well. But she noted that they had not finished their weaving because the lesson plan did not allow enough time for this. She suggested that more lessons were required to complete this work. I felt she was right. In the long term, more than one lesson would have to be allocated for this practical work.
- The teacher learned the basic skills of weaving easily herself and commented that, as long as the students understood the principles, they could master them too. She said 'I learned how to weave at the same time and helped my students and gave them feedback'. I agreed with her that the students had not found it difficult, partly because the weaver had explained the process simply, step by step.

Researcher's reflection

- The worksheets with the weaving instructions did not seem much help. I noticed that only a few of students checked the steps on them when they got into difficulties and they mostly asked the weaver or teacher for help. I concluded that

they were impatient and it was easier to ask the weaver and teacher than try to find out for themselves what to do when things went wrong.

- I observed the teacher helping students to weave and solving their difficulties.

This convinced me that art teachers should always have practical knowledge of the crafts included in their lessons.

I concluded that all these points were important enough to take into consideration for the future development of this lesson.

6.4.5. Lesson five: ‘Weaving *Alsadu* patterns’.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. Learn how to weave the *Al Dallaha* pattern.
2. Develop the requisite practical skills and learn through experience.
3. Recognise some design motifs used in *Alsadu* and what distinguishes each pattern.
4. Learn the names of such *Alsadu* patterns as *Dhurus el-khail*, *Midhkhar*, *Hubub*, *Dhalla*, *Aein*, *Uwairjan*, *Dallaha* and *Shajarah*.
5. Understand how *Alsadu* patterns were influenced by the desert and Bedouin culture.
6. Appreciate *Alsadu* colours and patterns and how hard it is to weave *Alsadu*.

Description: School B

On 10 April, I observed Lesson five at School B. The number of students was 24.

At the beginning of the lesson the teacher distributed the vocabulary sheets and asked the students to paste them into their sketchbooks. Then she asked what they had learned in the previous lesson. The students replied that they had met and learned things from the weaver, such as details of her life and the history and tools of *Alsadu*. They added that they had learned how to do something they loved and had found it easy.

This time, the teacher said that they would learn about *Alsadu* patterns. Then she asked the weaver to present the Power Point images of the patterns. The weaver talked about each pattern, explaining its symbolism and then discussing the differences between the designs (Figure 31).



Figure 31: Weaver explaining the patterns.

I noticed that the students were paying close attention to the weaver. They seemed interested in the meanings of the patterns and this topic occupied most of their questions. For example, one student asked ‘What is the meaning of *Midhkhar* and where does this name come from?’ She was told ‘It means the warehouse, the name of the place where an asset is kept, a place to save something until it is needed’. Another asked ‘Why does the one called *Shajarah* represent a tree?’ The weaver said, ‘It means a tree pattern and is the most complicated design used by Kuwaiti *Alsadu* weavers. They called it the *Shajarah*, because it represents everything the weavers experience and imagine.’ In the course of this discussion, the students sketched the patterns and noted their names and meanings (Figure 32).



Figure 32: Students working on their sketchbooks.

After this, the teacher asked them to name a few patterns and tell her about their symbolic meanings and how they were understood within Bedouin culture; and also what they meant to the students themselves. Then she told them that they would investigate and weave examples of the *AlDallaha* pattern, following instructions from the weaver. The students looked happy about this.

The weaver demonstrated the correct techniques sitting with one group at a table, with the others standing around to watch. I noticed that they picked up the skills very quickly. When the weaver asked “Do you find it difficult and is there anything you haven’t understood”, some of them replied “No, we are clear about it all”. They seemed eager to begin weaving. The teacher distributed the looms and the worksheets but again, only a few students used the worksheets. Before they started weaving the *Al Dallaha* pattern, the teacher gave each student the loom she had had before to let them complete the weaving they had left unfinished last time. I was surprised how easy they seemed to find it, perhaps because they had already learned the basic weaving skills the week before (Figure33).



Figure 33: Students learning the *AlDallaha* pattern.

Both the teacher and the weaver walked around among the students as they worked and gave them any feedback required. As noted above, the teacher had learned how to weave this pattern and thus was able to help the weaver guide the students. All the students looked interested and seemed to engage with the task. One of them said to the weaver, ‘Before we began these *Alsadu* lessons, I didn’t like art classes, but now I do’.

Five minutes before the lesson ended, the teacher brought it to a close by asking the students to list the names of the different *Alsadu* patterns and what they meant to the weavers and which one they had woven themselves. They answered all her questions correctly and seemed pleased to have had this chance to learn weaving. Most of them wanted to stay on to complete their artefacts. But the teacher had to refuse permission, since they had to go to their next class.

Teacher evaluation

After the lesson, I met the teacher to evaluate the lesson. Our discussion centred on the following points:

- The teacher thought the lesson content was well structured (learning about all the *Alsadu* patterns first and then focusing on one in particular and learning the technique). She thought the *Al Dallaha* pattern was a suitable choice for students of this age and said that they had found it easy. I agreed with her that the discussions and sketchbooks showed that they had learned a great deal about the *Alsadu* patterns, including new practical skills, which they found interesting.
- The teacher stated that, she had not expected the practical part to go so well and had not believed at first that her students could learn to weave. I was not surprised to hear this, because the weaver had also thought that it would be difficult for them at first. After this lesson, I reminded her of this and she commented, ‘To be honest, I did not imagine the plan would succeed, but the students proved this is not the case. Frankly, their weaving surprised me’.
- We agreed that the lesson time needed to be extended to allow the students to complete the practical work. They probably needed one more lesson for this purpose. Although they found it straightforward, weaving is slow work which has to be accurate and demands concentration.

Researcher’s reflection

- The students in this class were largely Kuwaiti nationals, but I concluded that the cultural background of the non nationals did not affect their learning about traditional artefacts and culture, either. All the students worked well and learned the *Alsadu* weaving techniques the first time that they were introduced to them.
- It was clear that studying historical artefacts in this way helps students to learn not only about artists as individuals and the particular characteristics of their artefacts but also about society and culture. Dr Keireine Canavan, who has researched

weaving patterns and their symbolism at *Alsadu House Museum*, states in the National Newspaper in 2010 that

(*Alsadu*) conveys the Bedouin's rich heritage and instinctive awareness of natural beauty, with patterns and designs messaging the nomadic lifestyle, the desert environment and the emphasis of symmetry and balance due to the making process (National Newspaper, 2010, p.4).

- The students had learned some *Alsadu* design motifs, their meanings and what distinguishes each pattern. Using authentic materials may have helped them to understand that the *Alsadu* weaving patterns were influenced by the desert surroundings and Bedouin culture within which they were made.

The overall finding from this discussion was that this lesson was successful but needed further development.

Description: School C

On 11 April, I attended the same lesson in School C. The number of students attending was 29. The teacher had written the lesson title on the board and prepared the required vocabulary in advance. She started by asking the students to write the title down and distributed the vocabulary sheets for their sketchbooks.

They gave positive answers to her question about what they had learned in the last lesson, listing, among other things, the basics of *Alsadu* weaving, the weaver's life-story and how she felt when she learned this craft. One of them commented that she had expected that 'learning how to weave *Alsadu* would be difficult but found it easy'.

The teacher told them that they would meet the weaver again to learn more about *Alsadu* patterns. When she reappeared, she asked her to show the class the traditional patterns and explain their symbolism. As she made the Power Point presentation, the weaver

named each pattern and analysed what it meant and the differences between them (Figure 34). The students questioned her about where the ideas for the motifs had come from and why, and which were the hardest and easiest ones. Meanwhile, the teacher asked the students to record what she was saying about the patterns and sketch them. Then she informed them that they would learn to weave an easy pattern called *AIDallah* in this lesson.



Figure 34: Weaver making Power Point presentation.

The weaver showed the students how to weave this pattern and asked if they had any questions, but there were none. The teacher distributed the looms and worksheets with instructions for making the *AIDallah* pattern. I noted that the students had no difficulty in resuming their weaving by themselves. As they worked, the weaver and teacher walked from group to group giving feedback. As was the case in the last lesson, this teacher very quickly learned the *AIDallah* technique from the weaver and they both helped the students when they ran into difficulties.

The standard of most students' work was good and in five cases their technique was excellent. The weaver went so far as to say to them 'You are a treasure; you should not stop weaving'. I noted the names of these students, because I thought that they might be needed in future to continue this tradition (Figure 35).

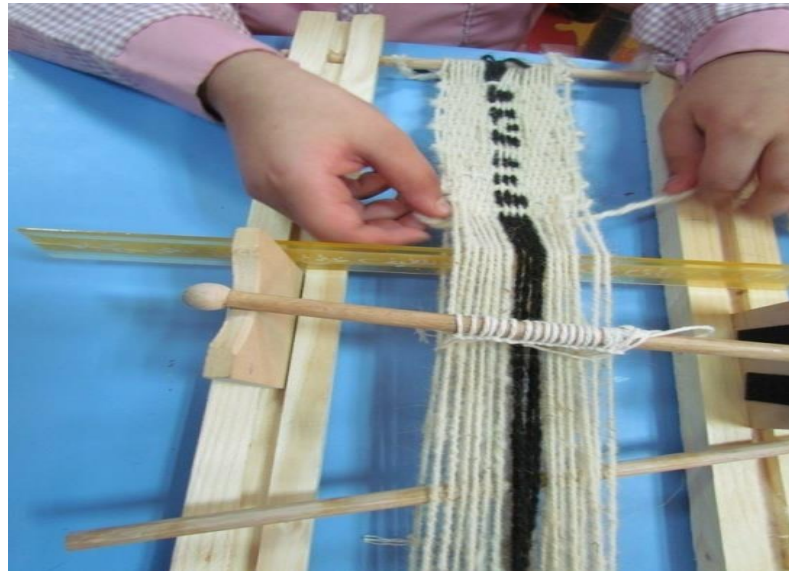


Figure 35: Student learning *AIDallah* technique.

Teacher evaluation

I evaluated this lesson with the teacher at the end, together with the weaver who joined in the discussion about technical standards. We discussed the following topics:

- The teacher and weaver were surprised by the quality of the students' practical work and I agreed that it was remarkable. The students had learned *AIDallah* immediately and most of their small woven patterns were technically impressive.
- The teacher noted that the students had used their sketchbooks well to record the names and symbolism of the patterns and their derivation, as explained by the weaver. They had also drawn the pattern shapes and motifs.

- I agreed that they had acquired plenty of useful knowledge. Using sketchbooks in this lesson had resulted in learning a good deal about Bedouin society and the desert environment.
- We agreed that more time would be needed to make artefacts. Only four students had come close to finishing their piece and weaving the *AlDallah* pattern had taken more time than I had anticipated.

Researcher's reflection

- I discovered several potential weavers during this lesson, who might well be needed in future to ensure the continuity of the craft and prevent it from dying out. My research at *Alsadu House Museum* had established that there are only a very few weavers left, most of them rather old, except for Metera, the one who was collaborating with us in schools. I thought it might be helpful if the museum 'adopted' some student volunteers who showed talent, and set up classes during vacations so as to encourage them to master this craft. It could employ them as museum educators and preserve the craft tradition at the same time.
- Once again I realised how important it is that art teachers should be familiar with the artists and art forms that their students are studying, since this means they can act as a direct learning resource. We were all pleased that the students had learned how to weave the *Al Dallaha* pattern and with the way that they had added this skill to the flat weaving started in the previous lesson. Moreover, I had not expected the teacher to learn to weave so quickly.

We agreed that all the points above needed to be taken into account in improving the materials in the curriculum unit.

6.4.6. Lesson six: ‘Creating artworks based on the theme of the Kuwaiti cultural heritage’.

Lesson objectives

Students will:

1. Understand that the function and meaning of traditional crafts can change.
2. Create and decorate contemporary artefacts with *Alsadu* woven designs.
3. Gain an appreciation of handmade objects.
4. Understand that Kuwait’s cultural heritage is relevant to contemporary life.

Description: School B

On 17 April 2012, I observed Lesson six in action in School B. The teacher had prepared the lesson vocabulary sheets and collected images of small, familiar functional everyday objects such as pencil cases, bags for mobiles, covers for small notebooks, and hair bands, to show the students. There were no absentees and the class numbered 25. As usual, the students wrote down the lesson title and stuck the vocabulary sheets into their sketchbooks before reading them. I noticed they did this task automatically, having grown used to it.

The teacher started the lesson by laying a big box in the centre of a table and telling the students my story of ‘Hanan and her grandmother’s gift’. This story is intended to encourage students to find a new use for their woven pieces.

At the end of the story, she asked them what they had learned from it and to think about what they could make with their *Alsadu* pieces or use them for. All their answers were relevant. One said, ‘I learned that the traditional *Alsadu* artefacts can be used nowadays’. A second said, ‘I will make a little bag for my iPod’ and a third said, ‘I will make an accessory I can wear on special days like traditional holidays’.

The teacher showed them some images of *Alsadu* artefacts and a few I had brought in, to give the students some ideas about what they could make or decorate.

Next, she took out some of the functional objects she had brought to class and asked each student to choose one to decorate with their woven pieces and to use the information and drawings in their sketchbooks to help them create a design. She asked them to draw designs and make notes about the function of the artefacts and told them they could invent a completely new one if they wished.

Most students drew designs for handbags and hair bands, but one student drew a necklace and two designed bracelets. They drew the designs in their sketchbooks, and then showed them to their teacher. Once she had given her approval, they started work on the artefacts. I noted that the students used their newly acquired weaving skills to make things which they could use immediately (Figure 36).



Figure 36: Students creating useful artefacts.

As the lesson drew to a close, the teacher questioned the students one final time about what they had learned, what they thought about traditional crafts now and whether they

were useful. All their answers were affirmative; for example, one student said, 'We can use the *Alsadu* weaving in new ways' and a second said, 'We can appreciate the advantages of combining traditional crafts with something modern', while a third added 'We can make something from our culture and give it a new function by hand'. A fourth answer was, 'We can create artefacts based on our cultural heritage. *Alsadu* is still useful in our everyday lives'.

After the lesson, three students surprised me by giving me a beautiful display board that they had made showing all the information they had gained from the lessons, together with some *Alsadu* images. They gave a presentation to the class about *Alsadu* artefacts and asked them what they had learned (Figure 37). This was an exceptional response and an intense surprise. I had not expected anything like this. Moreover it confirmed that they were interested in studying Kuwaiti culture. I was very pleased to receive this gift.



Figure 37: Student presentation and the display board.

One of them said to me, 'This is the last lesson on the Kuwaiti heritage, so what will we study in the next one?' I answered that I did not know and that she should ask her teacher.

It seemed she found this answer unsatisfactory, because she commented, ‘Then we will go back to drawing and colouring as we did before you came to us’.

Teacher evaluation

The teacher and I met to discuss and evaluate this last lesson in the curriculum unit.

- The teacher liked the story and what it conveyed. She said that it sent a message to the students that traditional Kuwaiti society valued *Alsadu* crafts in everyday life and understood they can still be put to good use. This theme infused the story and communicated the lesson objectives in a way that interested the students. I agreed that they seemed interested and, from their comments afterwards, concluded that they had indirectly understood its significance and that it was a suitable instructional strategy for students of this age.
- The teacher, too, noted that making functional artefacts was a good idea. Observers could guess what the aims of the lesson were from looking at what the students had made and could see that they had managed to introduce traditional design elements into contemporary artefacts. I agreed with the teacher that this is one way to maintain the continuity of the nation’s artistic heritage.

Researcher’s reflection

- Asking the students to use the information and sketches in their sketchbooks to design *Alsadu* pieces did not work. The contents of the sketchbooks did not seem to help them much when it came to actually designing an artefact. I decided that this was due to their lack of design experience.

- I concluded, however, that giving them the chance to create or decorate an artefact with *Alsadu* woven designs had taught them they could find a new function for a traditional craft. Looking at the images and examples of contemporary artefacts created and sold at the *Alsadu House Museum* helped the students to develop design ideas. This was another reason for agreeing with the American educator Freedman (2003b) that students should take professional artists and designers as exemplars. I concluded that artistic production is very important in cultural learning when it gives students opportunities to compare past and contemporary designs. As Thistlewood (1986) points out, teaching art history without providing opportunities for students to experience process and conflict ignores their need to express themselves through art.

It was clear that the points made in evaluating this lesson needed to be carefully reviewed in order to overcome the problems which had emerged.

Description: School C

On 18 April 2012, I observed the final lesson (Lesson six) in action in School C. There were 27 students in the class. When they saw me they asked where the weaver was and I told them that she was not coming this time.

The teacher had prepared for the lesson in the usual way. She asked them to stick the vocabulary sheets into their sketchbooks and read them. Then she asked them to pay attention so that she could tell them the helpful story of 'Hanan and her grandmother's gift'. On a table in front of the class she placed a beautiful wooden box containing some *Alsadu* crafts. Then she began to tell the story.

As she proceeded, I could see that the students were listening carefully and enjoying it. When she had finished, she asked them what the message of the story was and what they wanted to do with their woven pieces. Some specific and some rather general answers emerged. Some students said, 'I will make a small bag for my I-phone' or 'I will make a necklace'; others merely said that they could make things that they needed. The teacher showed them the images of small functional objects that I had provided, to encourage them to think of designs. Then she handed out some small and large bags, hair bands and crowns and asked them all to choose an artefact and create a design for it. She suggested that they open their sketchbooks and review all the information that they had collected about *Alsadu* crafts and should think of ways to give their woven pieces the new function of decorating a fresh artefact.

The students all chose one of the objects on display and went back to their seats, looking very excited. They studied their sketchbooks briefly, but did not seem to know what to look for and then began to freely sketch designs. They were clearly keen to see the results and rushed up to the teacher to get her approval so they could start making something. In my view the students succeeded in inventing new functions for *Alsadu* weaving (Figure 38).



Figure 38: Student inventing new functions for her weaving.

By the end of the lesson, most students had finished decorating a small functional object with their woven pattern, though a few of them needed a little extra time.

To finish, the teacher asked them what they had learned and what their views on traditional crafts were now. The answers included, '*Alsadu* weaving can be used for many things', 'It is an ancient heritage that is useful even today', 'We can blend the old artistic heritage into our modern artworks' and 'Traditional crafts are still useful for objects in use today'.

I was very pleased with these answers. It seemed that the aims of the lesson had been achieved and the results were varied and beautiful. I saw in them the imprint of the Bedouin artistic heritage from Kuwait (Figure 39).



Figure 39: Students' decorated artefacts.

Teacher evaluation

Directly afterwards, the teacher and I sat down to evaluate the last lesson and discussed the following points.

- The teacher said that she very much liked the idea of putting *Alsadu* to new uses. Her students enjoyed the technical work involved in decorating the artefacts; even though their pieces of *Alsadu* weaving were small, they had used them in meaningful ways to decorate bags and hair bands. She felt that this practical activity had increased their self-confidence, in that they had found that they could make things for personal use with their own hands. As Hickman says (2005b), designing and making art works are beneficial activities because they encourage students to take personal responsibility for their actions and enable meaning to be created. He understands this process as involving the development and transformation of identity. I was struck by the smiles on the faces of the students and how happy they looked when I saw them wearing their bags the moment they finished making them. The appeal of this activity for girls was evident. One student commented to the teacher, 'I did not expect to be able to make this beautiful bag from my small woven piece', to which she replied, 'Neither did I'.
- The teacher said the lesson content was attractive and she greatly enjoyed teaching it. She corroborated my impression that both she and her students had also enjoyed interacting with each other. She said that she felt sorry this was the last lesson. She had not expected teaching cultural heritage to be so interesting, but the curriculum unit had changed her opinion. She confessed that she had been afraid at first that it would fail because the lessons contained so much information and there were so many new skills for her and her students to learn, but, as she said, 'I

found the opposite. I did not feel bored with this lesson content at any point because the teaching strategies were so diverse’.

- She went on to say that she liked the story in this lesson very much and it had well summed up the learning objectives. She wished the curriculum experiment had been longer and regretted having to go back to teaching the regular curriculum. I sympathised with her. I had noticed how much the students enjoyed weaving and concluded that using a range of different instructional strategies to teach the new content had been successful.

Researcher’s reflection

- Once again the students did not use the contents of their sketchbooks to develop new designs for *Alsadu* artefacts and did not understand how to do this. I concluded that it was more difficult for them to get design ideas in this way than from looking at the artefacts and objects on display.

6.5.0. Analysis of Pre-test/Post-test Questionnaire

After the first implementation of the curriculum unit, and analyses of the answers to the pre-test and post-test questionnaires (Appendix E), I made minor improvements to its design (Appendix J).

In this cycle, I administered the revised questionnaire (Appendix J) in the same way as before twice in each school, once before and once after the curriculum unit was taught. The analysis of the data thus obtained led to the following conclusions:

1. Although this was the first time the students had learned the concept of art history, it was clear they had acquired a sense of what it involves.
2. From the answers to the second question in the post-test, it was plain that most of the students realised that studying the traditional life of the Kuwaiti people helped them to value their past. The lessons had helped gain an initial understanding of Kuwait's Bedouin culture, in particular.
3. The answer to the question about the museum showed that the visit to the *Alsadu House Museum* had given them a chance to see a museum and they had become clearer about the aim of visiting museums. They had also had an opportunity to look at crafts made by women, and meet a professional artist, a weaver, and learn from her.
4. They had learned about a women's craft for the first time in school and been taught to make things by hand in an interesting way.
5. They had begun to understand what sketchbooks can be used for.

The students' answers confirmed that the worksheets questions grew clearer to them; most of the answers in the post-test indicated that the learning objectives had largely been achieved and that the curriculum had succeeded in giving the students an opportunity to learn something about the culture of their country.

I concluded that the pre-test and post-test questionnaire was useful and played an important role in the curriculum experiment. It had proved to be an important way of gathering evidence about improvements to students' learning; and confirmed that the curriculum unit had worked well.

This final evaluation of the chapter and all the data and findings lead to the reflections reported in the next chapter and to a summative evaluation of the strengths and the weaknesses of the curriculum model.

CHAPTER SEVEN: REFLECTION ON AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

7.0. Introduction

According to Allison (1997), the aim of research in art education is to build such relationships as a researcher determines between theory and practice, in order to learn more about the research problem and to formulate theory on ways in which to analyse the data.

In Kuwait very little has been written to date on teaching art or developing cultural awareness. At the beginning of this research, I already knew that I wanted to introduce cultural content along the lines of Western theory into the art curriculum in Kuwait, so I read a great deal about this. Kuwait has not yet built up a firm relationship between theory and practice as a basis for teaching art. But, because I understood theory as important for developing the art curriculum, I was concerned over Kuwait's failure to develop it. When the present research began, art teaching in Kuwait was entirely practice based.

After the curriculum that I designed had been implemented twice and jointly evaluated, I reflected on and analysed all the data again. At this stage I tried to come to final conclusions about the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum unit and the model.

Before I decided on any reflective themes, I analysed the results of the empirical research more deeply and tried to connect the findings to the theories uncovered during the literature review. In addition, I located and reviewed some new theory in the Western literature, because the data alerted me to ideas and practices that I had not thought or read about before. The resources which I used for this purpose were mainly art education journals, such as the *Journal of Art and Design Education*, *International Journal of*

Education through Art, and websites, in one case, a report by government inspectors in the UK.

Before I started to write the chapter I asked myself numerous questions. For example: Had I managed to introduce Western theory and the practice of teaching cultural heritage into the Kuwaiti primary curriculum? Was my choice of a traditional women's craft the best one for this purpose? How successful was the museum visit? What were the most successful instructional strategies for implementing the content? Is a Western model of action research suited to curriculum development in Kuwait?

The four main themes selected for reflection and discussion were as follows: (i) approaches to teaching cultural heritage through art; (ii) the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum unit, (iii) the value of museum visits; and (iv) the strengths and weaknesses of the action research method. I identified these particular themes for future analysis and discussion because I needed to clarify my own ideas about them before I could answer the research questions and come to final conclusions about ways to develop my curricular framework in the future.

7.1.0. Teaching Cultural Heritage through Art

My initial research into the various conceptual frameworks for art curricula in Western countries identified many different models. Briefly, I examined frameworks developed by the American and British authors, Feldman (1970), Taylor (1986, 1992, 2000), Hickman (1994, 2001), Bolin (1992/1993), Freedman (2003), Greer (1987) and Chapman (1978), among others, with a view to clarifying how they addressed the task of teaching the cultural heritage.

First of all, I reflected again on definitions of the term *cultural heritage* as they relate to Kuwait. As Graham (2002) affirms, “heritage itself is conceptualised as the meanings attached in the present to the past and refers to knowledge defined within social, political and cultural contexts” (p. 1003). While reflecting on what cultural heritage is, or might mean, in Kuwait, I looked once again at the work of the Kuwaiti educator Al Sabah (2008). She understood the term as a shorthand way of referring to “the vast treasure of art work, architecture, artefacts, literature and other forms of intellectual work created by people” (Al Sabah, 2008, p. 281). She made a persuasive case for considering Kuwait’s cultural heritage as ‘a vast treasure’ created by people throughout the ages, which has to be passed on to future generations in good condition.

In the original literature review, I identified several other definitions of *cultural heritage*, but eventually adopted Graham’s (2002) as the most proper one for this study. I chose it because he describes it as “the continuous definition and re-affirmation of cultural identity, a screening of values, a use of memories of the past, a selective resource for the present” (Graham, 2002, p.1004). It was this that had inspired me to use examples of *Alsadu* weaving in art lessons as a way of making their intangible and tangible heritage apparent to these students. At the end of the empirical research, when I had put this idea into practice, I concluded that investigating tangible examples of heritage at first hand in the form of *Alsadu* weaving had indeed helped the students concerned to understand something of Kuwait’s Bedouin culture. Visiting a museum, using sketchbooks, learning through discussion and being trained by a professional weaver all provided the students with glimpses of their intangible cultural heritage.

7.1.1. Why teaching cultural heritage is important in Kuwait

A report by The National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education in England and Wales (1999) is adamant that teaching and learning about culture should always be part of a school's work. At the end of this research I also was convinced that lessons with content relating to cultural heritage should be introduced into the Kuwaiti curriculum. After reflecting on the theories about this in the course of the preliminary literature review I identified three main reasons for including it in general education: (i) it helps children to understand the characteristics of their society; (ii) it helps the traditional heritage to be maintained; and (iii) it facilitates the building of personal and national identity. These are discussed in turn in more detail below.

7.1.1.1. Understanding society

In 1998 Irit Rogoff stated that visual images and material artefacts should be understood as expressions of people's thoughts, beliefs and attitudes. She asserts that they form the identities of the individuals and groups who make and look at them and embody their cultural values and beliefs at a specific point in time. This is consistent with the view of the American art educator, Greer (1987), who argues that the best way of studying the culture of previous societies is to study their artworks. Likewise McFee and Degge (1977) understand every artwork as a form of communication about culture and a carrier of cultural meanings. The students who participated in my experimental curriculum observed, explored and investigated selected Kuwaiti cultural artefacts, examined their function, design and significance; and made similar artefacts. These activities stimulated them to imagine how Bedouin people used to live in the desert, which materials they used in everyday life, what crafts they practised and some of their customs and values. At the

end of the empirical part of the research, I concluded that the students had understood that the materials and equipment used for *Alsadu* weaving were sourced locally, that Bedouin people made the most of what they found around them and that they used all the natural resources of their desert environment to supply their everyday needs, including every part of their animals. The students seemed to understand that, although the conditions in which Bedouin people lived in the past were simple and harsh, they knew how to deal with this. The students learned that *Alsadu* weaving used to have enormous social and symbolic significance; and that the weavers made useful things for everyday life, including the tents that sheltered them. The action research team agreed that the impression they had gained of Bedouin people was that they were dignified and generous.

According to Al Sabah (2001), traditional Bedouin society was like a single body or family bound together by kinship and linked to the life of the desert. Moreover, social organisation in Kuwait used to be based on tribal rulings and was formed by several families bound together, either by blood or occupation, who shared the same views on economic, political and moral matters. The tribal rulings were determined by elders, who were chosen by the tribal families. Al Sabah (2001) suggests that there is a sense in which Kuwait is still a tribal society today, but the rule of the tribe is nothing like as strong as it once was. On reading her book again I learned from it that, “As a tribal or semi tribal society in origin, the early settlers of Kuwait kept the traditional value system of the desert and thus maintained the important tribal principle of genealogy as the basis of their stratification system” (pp.15-16). In the Introduction to this thesis I have included some of the general information available on the ethnic origins of the Kuwaiti people.

Later on, when I researched *Alsadu* in detail for the curriculum unit, I learned that some weavers weave a *wasm* (the sign or emblem of an ancient tribe) motif, similar to the brands that nomads use today to distinguish Bedouin camels and cattle. As Hilden points

out (2010), for collectors of woven textiles, the site of origin and provenance are a primary concern; thus, knowledge of *wasm* helps them to identify the tribal and regional origins of an Arab weaver. I learned also that the *wasm* were incorporated into woven artefacts out of a sense of pride and loyalty to tribe and family (ibid, p.53).

Before I designed the curriculum unit, I studied the collection of artefacts and books in the *Alsadu House Museum*, and interviewed the remaining weavers. In doing so I discovered much about Bedouin life and customs that I did not know before, because I had never been taught about it in school or college. Thus, I had to spend time researching/reviewing the literature about Kuwaiti culture. For example, I read a summary history of Kuwaiti society and culture published by the Royal Scottish Museum, (1985) and made notes for future reference, specifically so that I could include this information in the introduction to the curriculum unit.

At this time, I became particularly interested in the art curriculum model developed in the late 1970s by the American educator, Laura Chapman (1978, p. 122). This model has three art education aims which I concluded were especially important for Kuwait, namely: personal expression and response, awareness of the artistic heritage and awareness of art in society. To begin with, I was most interested in Chapman's second and third aims, because they are not part of the present Kuwaiti curriculum. Among other things, she argued that it is important for children to learn about the work of diverse kinds of artistic communities, which are peopled by artists, craftworkers, architects and designers. She wants children to learn how they generate ideas for their work and use visual attributes and various media and tools to express ideas and perceive, describe, examine and judge artworks. Importantly for Kuwait, she also understands the artistic heritage as a significant part of the general cultural heritage. Her third curriculum aim, 'awareness of art in society', implies that children should learn how people in their own society and

others create art forms and improve their perception of visual images in their everyday environment. She thinks that this kind of general knowledge about society should also be taught in Geography, History and Religion lessons at school, not only in Art. In her discussion of the content of the art curriculum, she does not single out art history as a separate area of study but links knowledge about art and artists to the general educational aims of learning about society and the cultural heritage as a whole. I applied her ideas in my curriculum and concluded that the students who participated had increased their understanding of Kuwaiti society and cultural heritage through studying the traditional artefacts I had selected in the way she suggests.

After I had examined Chapman's ideas, I was keen to find a way of situating learning about traditional art forms in a present-day context. As a teacher in Kuwait, I had already started to teach traditional arts, but Chapman's aims were more sociologically oriented than I was used to, in that she wanted to combine this with getting students actively involved in learning about their own society. Another reason for her wanting students to do this was to help them develop ideas for their own artworks. The literature that I read when I first came to England focused on teaching people about inherited culture and because I recognised how deficient the Kuwaiti art curriculum was in this regard it formed the main direction of the research. But Chapman's ideas showed me that this aim was capable of further development, using an issues based approach.

Some art educators have criticized art curricula which focus on issues in present-day society, arguing that they are biased towards Social Studies. During this action research, one teacher did mention that the content of my new curriculum seemed more like Social Studies than Art. I can understand why. The art curriculum in Kuwaiti schools at present focuses almost exclusively on art practice and is not underpinned by theory of any kind, let alone theories about the relationship of art to society and/or culture. But in this

curriculum project I tried to fill this gap and one finding from the curriculum experiments was that students can learn about their society, culture and cultural heritage by studying art and combining theory and practice. I concluded that art can be introduced into any school subject if it is taught in this way.

7.1.1.2. Linking tradition to the present through crafts

As noted above, Al Sabah (2008), writing about Kuwait, states that “our cultural heritage ...is what we inherit from past generations and what we should pass on to those who come after us and should preserve and care for”. The important point is that I chose a traditional craft as a way of transmitting Kuwait’s cultural heritage to these students. The curriculum aims that I developed are in line with Al Sabah’s ideas and with some of those promoted in recent international research and curriculum experiments featuring craft education. The Finnish art educators Collanus, Kairavuori and Rusanen (2011), for example, understand “passing craft and the heritage of craft from one generation to another as the essence of craft education” (p. 11). The teachers participating in these writers’ curriculum experiments understood textile crafts as a particularly good ‘link to the past’, in particular when they combined teaching about heritage with teaching ‘basic craft techniques’, ‘skills’ and ‘values’. I gained the impression from the recent literature on craft education that passing on cultural heritage through involvement in crafts is not uncommon in European education systems, where it is linked to explorations of identity. The teachers participating in my research reported that they had learned a new way of thinking about ways to teach traditional Kuwaiti crafts. In the last two lessons in the curriculum unit, the students were first taught to weave small pieces of *Alsadu* in the traditional way and then they experimented with creating new utilitarian functions for them. The motivation for this activity was partly conservationist.

Anderson Milbrandt (2005) contends that “We make art to make sense of things and to give meaning to our existence” (p.139) and that, through studying visual culture, students can come to understand the construction of self and how they can rebuild it through making artworks. According to Freedman (2000), students spontaneously make art to express ideas and feelings not only about themselves, but about their surroundings, their social context and the things which act upon them. Thus, another reason for getting them to make things in school is to connect them with their surroundings. Weisman (2002) supports this view and argues that connecting students to everyday human experience in the classroom enables them to explore and define their own understanding of the world within an atmosphere of acceptance and guided direction and that this contributes to personal and communal growth.

Focusing on crafts rather than the fine arts (painting and drawing) was a significant innovation in the art curriculum in Kuwait. Karppinen (2008) refers to “craft-art” education which, she suggests, means “demonstrating one’s skills, knowledge, thoughts, experiences, perceptions and sensations to other people” (p.84), together with producing crafted items. The action team was surprised that the students in Kuwait were able to use traditional craft materials and learn basic skills of traditional weaving on simple looms in school. They were also surprised that the students found it relatively easy to adapt and modify this craft so as to make it relevant to present-day life. In a sense, they transformed this craft tradition by creating new designs and present-day uses for their weaving.

7.1.1.3. Building national identity

At the global level, Cinpoes (2008) has defined *national identity* as “a type of collective identity that gives allegiance to the nation” (p.4). For Bloom (1990), “national identity describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with

national symbols– have internalised the symbols of the nation...” (p.52). For Cinpoes (2008, p. 5), “culture plays a crucial role in the process of identity formation and can also help to account for the often non-rational character of nationalism”.

The Canadian art educator, Chalmers (1996), has argued strongly that studying a nation’s art, in the form of collections of artefacts helps individuals to learn about their culture and heritage. This view is sympathetic to the Kuwaiti government’s concern with nation building and of course my own. I discovered the concept of cultural identity and began to understand something of its importance only in the course of this research. When the action team taught the students about their cultural heritage in this project, they wanted to strengthen their sense of national identity as well. At the time of writing, there is a general interest in nation building in Kuwait. The Ministry of Education has stated that students in schools must be provided with sufficient knowledge about their local environment and culture to help them understand both these concepts (Kuwait Ministry of Education, 1966, pp.12-14). I understand that the Ministry of Education began to promulgate these ideas along time ago, but they have not yet been incorporated into curriculum practice.

Writing in the UK in the 1960s, the curriculum expert Stenhouse argued that the main purpose of formal education in most countries at the time was to enlist students in the national culture so that they could understand and appreciate its achievements (Stenhouse, 1967). A recent Ministry of Education report in Kuwait (1996) identifies an urgent need to strike a balance between protecting Kuwait’s traditional national culture and adapting to the cultural changes which have occurred at local, regional and international levels since the 1950s. Kuwaiti society today emphasises modernisation and progress, but, Al Sabah (2001) and others believe, there is too much emphasis on this. She remarks, “In this rushed quest for the new, we have neglected some beautiful and meaningful aspects of our past” (p. 8). One of the goals for general education in Kuwait in 2008 was

“Contributing to the achievement of interaction with the current age’s requirement of freedom of thought and response to the dynamics of change without conflict with the cultural identity of society” (Ministry of Education, 2004-2008, p.28). This should be possible in future, given that the Ministry already recognises in principle that one of the main objectives of education through art is to develop an interest in Kuwait’s cultural heritage.

In the present research, the participating students learned about Bedouin culture within Kuwait, which is a part of the national cultural heritage; and they did so primarily through investigating and representing the symbolism in traditional *Alsadu* artefacts. Thus, the present action research confirmed that Kuwait’s national cultural identity can be addressed in lessons in primary schools. It is important, however, that students engaging in future in this kind of learning are given more opportunities to analyse the concept of identity itself before they consider their culture and heritage. Although teaching cultural heritage is not yet integral to the Kuwaiti school curriculum, this research convinced me that educational policy makers and practitioners in schools in Kuwait need to begin to consider a range of issues relating to both identity and culture and think about strategies for encouraging students to identify with their nation. A national report, called the *Development of Education in the State of Kuwait* referred to above, which was published recently by the Ministry of Education (2004-2008) states that the education system is facing a number of serious challenges, one of them cultural. It maintains that this cultural challenge is one of the most important, because it affects all society’s values and trends and because people in Kuwait are experiencing rapid, dangerous change. On this basis, it advocates the creation of curricula targeted at upholding national identity by consolidating all its positive cultural values. The Ministry states that it does not want Kuwait to exist separately from the rest of the world, but at the same time it must keep its

national cultural identity (pp. 23, 24). So it appears that the present research took place at an opportune historical moment.

At this reflective stage at the end of the empirical research, I realised that it was important to consider the concepts of identity and nationalism in more depth, so I did some additional reading in social theory. According to Brown (2008), socialisation plays a crucial role in shaping identity. Many social theorists posit, like Brown, that “identity is formed through the socialisation process and the influence of social institutions like the family, the education system and the mass media” (p. 38). He understands identity (2008) as referring to the way in which we define our personalities in relation to others and also the way in which people see and identify us. He argues that the individual identities which help to shape our personalities are formed by many encounters during processes of socialisation with family, friends, school, the media, the workplace and other agencies. Hogg and Abrams (1988) define it as people’s perceptions of who and what type of person they are, and how they communicate with others. Jenkins (1996) suggests that the term *identity* refers to the modes characterised by individuals and groups in their social relations with other individuals and groups. The main objective in the curriculum unit was that students should learn about Kuwaiti national identity and what characterises individuals and groups in Kuwaiti Bedouin society.

I agree with Al Sabah (2008) that each society is responsible for creating and identifying the things which distinguish its culture from that of others. Without this, a society will consist of individuals without a cohesive framework. She suggests that people mainly achieve a sense of social cohesion through a thorough knowledge of their history and heritage. Kuwait is a new nation state, which is only now beginning to accumulate this kind of knowledge. The American art educators McFee and Degge (1977), writing in a different part of the world and time-frame, also state, “We must remember that a people’s

identity is developed in relation to their background and that the art in it helped them learn and develop concepts of who and what they are” (p.10). My conclusion, based on the evidence of the present research, was that it is possible to introduce *Alsadu* artefacts to female students in government schools in a way that helps them to construct their identities and that my curriculum experiments could be extended to other kinds of school in future.

In this research I introduced a new approach to teaching about culture into government schools in Kuwait. I understand schooling as one of the main agents of socialisation. The action research team tried to ensure that all the participating students had a chance to learn about one aspect of national culture and documented the experiment systematically. The research produced curriculum materials which could be published and disseminated more widely in future. The curriculum intervention was based on the premise that, given a chance to learn about their cultural heritage in art lessons, children of Kuwaiti origin may begin to construct a national cultural identity. I came to the conclusion also that the government schools which provide education exclusively for Kuwaiti nationals have a particular obligation to educate children about their national culture and cultural heritage.

7.1.2. Art Education in Kuwait, Britain and America

Most of the literature about cultural education that I reviewed came from America and I was struck by the differences between views of art education there and in Kuwait.

Arguably, America is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world and this probably explains why its educational policy makers publicly promote multiculturalism. Many Western nations have laws promoting equal opportunities and encourage culturally diverse education with the aim of providing opportunities for all students to develop their full potential, whatever their social and cultural backgrounds. In contrast, Kuwaiti

government schools are reserved for children of Kuwaiti nationals, most of whom have similar cultural backgrounds.

A reminder of the historical context for this policy decision may be useful at this point. After the discovery of petroleum in 1938, large numbers of foreigners migrated to Kuwait. Since many of these immigrants are employed on contracts of varying length, their periods of residence fluctuate and correspondingly affect population figures. The 1980 census recorded the following analysis: Kuwaitis 41.7%, other Arabs 42.3%, Asians 15%, Africans 1%, Europeans 8% and Americans 1%” (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985). According to Salem, in a resident population of over 2.5 million, “not quite one million are Kuwaitis; the remainder are largely Arab and South Asian workers, along with a number of Westerners” (2007, p.6). In effect, in the second half of the 20th century, Kuwait became a culturally diverse nation.

During the research, my awareness increased that this multi-social blend is not currently reflected in the provision of formal education in government schools and that the Ministry is concerned to foster national culture, rather than multiculturalism. As the UNESCO International Bureau of Education, (2006/07) points out, free education is understood as a right for Kuwaiti citizens alone; and the children of other “residents” must attend private schools. Since I now find this policy difficult to reconcile with the idea that education is the right of every citizen, without regard to identity or nationality, I hope that in the future I can work towards changing it. I would like free education to be a right for every person who lives in Kuwait, as is the case in America and the UK. But this point cannot be explored further here, because it is beyond the scope of this particular research.

The curriculum unit developed in the present study was taught to children in different authorities who attended three government schools, one of which contained five non-Kuwaiti nationals who were allowed to attend as special cases. All the other students were

Kuwaiti nationals. An important finding from implementing the unit in Cycles three and four was that neither the nationality nor the cultural background of these students affected their motivation to absorb the content of the lessons, or to weave *Alsadu* patterns. We concluded that all students, whether Kuwaiti nationals or not, could be taught to make traditional Kuwaiti artefacts in this way and would benefit from learning something about Kuwait's national culture.

7.1.3. Western influences on Kuwaiti society today

As noted previously, society in Kuwait differs from Western societies in many ways; for example, in attitudes towards religion, gender, multiculturalism and educational rights. In America and the UK, most schools are coeducational and teachers probably have more freedom to design their curricula. In Kuwait, schools are single-sex; and the Education Ministry dictates and controls curricula without at all involving teachers in their design. In other matters, however, Kuwait has borrowed many social and cultural practices from the West; indeed society is very heavily influenced by American-style consumerism. Foster (1998) describes Kuwaiti nationals, young people in particular, as “enthusiastic about Western television and movies” and states that the nation is currently “more socially open and free to exchange ideas than most of the other Arabian Gulf states” (p.113). As Albader, a researcher at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait, remarks (2007):

Kuwaiti culture nowadays is becoming more related towards western society. A portion is westernized, the culture is varied and we have a multi-cultural background here, it is also possible to find two extremes. You can find someone who wants to be more Europeanized in his outlook and behaviour and another who is really fanatical in his behaviour and attitudes towards keeping alive Arabic roots. You find some taking the middle ground, or [some] in between, who are mostly modern, flexible and tolerant. There are tolerant groups and there are extreme groups and there are outgoing groups. These are all due to the fact that Kuwait is and has been exposed to many cultures and a variety of influences, especially from

Americans, and this was seen more after the liberation of Kuwait (p.4, original text).

The main reason for my wanting to teach young people in Kuwait about the special qualities of their national cultural heritage is that the nation's distinctive cultural identity, in common with that of other Gulf nations, is under threat. In the curriculum unit developed for the present project, I used *Alsadu* weaving to introduce a few students to a brief history of Kuwait and provide some basic information about the natural environment and the culture and lifestyle of the Bedouin people. It appears that they did begin to understand something of Kuwaiti Bedouin culture in the past from investigating one of its art forms. They were also encouraged to personally communicate their feelings and thoughts about the concepts of culture, heritage and identity and interpret them in visual and verbal terms through discussion, writing and drawing. If art teachers continue with this approach, maybe it could help to build a stronger sense of national identity in Kuwaiti society and stimulate greater interest in taking action to conserve the national heritage. It is clear, however, that more research of different kinds is needed to confirm this hypothesis.

During this research, I discovered that Western theories and practices of art, art history and art education are not easily transferable to other cultural contexts. Moreover, the concept of educational research is understood differently in Kuwait. Unlike America and the United Kingdom, Kuwait has a very limited culture of research in art education. There is no specialist art education literature or funding for curriculum experiments and no art education conferences or professional associations where art teachers could share their views. Most importantly for this particular study, Kuwaiti art teachers are not taught any art history in their pre-service courses.

Early on in the research, I thought that I could introduce the theory and practice of art history as developed in Western countries directly into the Year Five art curriculum. But a key finding of the research as a whole was that there is not yet enough knowledge of the history of art in Kuwait to do this. Instead of introducing it as a separate component of the national curriculum for art, it is more appropriate to focus on linking art and cultural learning. I still rate art history an important academic discipline, but recognise now that it cannot be incorporated into art education in Kuwait at present, because it is not an established area of study in society. The action research team faced extreme difficulty finding accurate historical information about traditional *Alsadu* artefacts and it was this that impelled me to focus on the theory and practice of art and cultural learning. But I came to the realisation, at the end of the research that establishing art history as an academic discipline is essential because it has the potential to produce the kind of knowledge of the past that is needed to understand Bedouin culture. I am aware that the historical understanding of the students who participated in this research was limited because it had to rely mainly on their own artistic investigations of *Alsadu* artefacts in one museum, and on what their teachers and weaver knew and were able to tell them.

7.2.0. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Curriculum Unit

7.2.1. Content

7.2.1.1. Choice of a traditional women's craft

Before I wrote the curriculum unit, I had to research traditional *Alsadu* weaving past and present. I did this by reviewing documents and books at *Alsadu House Museum*. I found only one book that was really helpful in this regard but it was not written for teachers and

this is why I had to develop the curriculum materials myself. Because the book *Al Sadu: The Techniques of Bedouin Weaving* (1989), written by a British weaving consultant Anne-Rhona Crichton, was the only one that was simple enough to use as a basis for teaching the techniques in schools, I gave the teachers in the action team a copy each and will recommend it to other primary teachers also.

Writing about craft education, Karppinen (2008) states, “an artefact as an end product plays a meaningful role in displaying a person’s skillfulness” (p.84). Garber (2002) also states that learning craft skills involves more than simply producing objects; it also involves imagination, creative thinking and reflection. She says that art teachers should challenge students to find their own solutions to practical problems at every stage of a craft making process. For Karppinen (2008) the primary purpose of art or craft education should be to stimulate children, young people and adults to make crafts so as to continue a tradition. I chose to devise a craft based art curriculum unit in which students investigated *Alsadu* artefacts with a view to enhancing their ability to connect with the cultural heritage, national customs and artistic traditions. After completing the empirical research, I placed more value on the theory of the American art educator, Bolin (1992/1993), that art education should be linked to the field of Material Culture Studies and include crafts in particular. On reflection, I considered this more important at the end than I did at the start. The inclusion of a living traditional craft as curriculum content is very important for art education in Kuwaiti schools, because our artistic and cultural heritage lies in crafts, not fine art. Moreover, unless we study our crafts, we cannot learn about the national cultural heritage, either.

Teaching crafts is unusual in Kuwaiti primary schools. In the current curriculum, the content is mainly fine art (painting and drawing), with some time set aside for ceramics. By the end of the research project, it was clear to me that the content of the art curriculum

needs to change. Art does not consist of painting and drawing only; it covers many things, including artefacts made of textiles, such as *Alsadu*, and of wood, ceramics and metal. In this research, I introduced the activity of weaving a traditional craft, using authentic materials, into art lessons. I am convinced now that children in Kuwaiti schools should be given a wider understanding of what art comprises and in particular that there should be more lessons about Arab crafts.

The action research took place in girls' schools and female students studied a women's traditional craft. They gained first-hand experience of working with a female practitioner who provided them with authentic information about the function, meaning and design of *Alsadu* textile crafts. They were also supplied with secondary information which was included in the curriculum materials, about the crafts of the desert and Bedouin culture and society, derived from my own research.

According to researchers, craft teaching has declined in British schools in the last three decades, for many reasons. As long ago as 1952, Robertson noted that whereas entering an apprenticeship is the traditional way of learning a craft, this model of craft education is difficult to implement with many students of more or less the same age in every school classroom and without master craftsmen. She concludes that small class numbers are essential or that teachers should divide students into ability groups to work together. In 1995, Hall noted that what controls the teaching of arts and crafts in schools is the availability of resources, including the size of the classroom, facilities, equipment, materials available and the length and frequency of lessons. A finding in Houghton's report of craft education in English and Welsh schools in 2000 was that the teachers claimed it had declined because the tools and materials were too expensive, whereas students blamed high class numbers and the short time-frame for learning. A finding from the present action research was that weaving *Alsadu* patterns is indeed time-

consuming and requires a great deal of concentration, as is likely to be the case for any traditional craft. Hence, it must be concluded that the new curriculum unit should allocate more time to practical work.

The student evaluations of the lessons showed that they enjoyed learning from the weaver and each other. The teachers also learned skills from watching her. I noticed some students helping others catch up. A weakness of the curriculum design was that I did not talk through the weaving task with the weaver in sufficient detail in advance. I concluded that collaborating with a practising artist is extremely helpful, but is not enough in itself to ensure that *Alsadu* weaving is taught in schools in Kuwait. I realised that when the curriculum unit is implemented again, the teachers involved will need to attend a professional development workshop first in which they receive practical instruction in relevant weaving techniques.

After teaching this curriculum unit, I concluded that it is important to choose authentic craft materials. As Robertson (1952) has pointed out using 'raw materials' is important, for three main reasons: (i) to develop students' sensitivity to their qualities; (ii) to develop their perception of the material, as an essential part of making something; and (iii) to learn how important it is to deal with or control the materials. In this research, I provided the students with authentic *Alsadu* materials, such as wool yarn and simple looms, and tried to develop their sensitivity to the properties and qualities of these things. I concluded that this facilitated the learning of both the craft, and the nature of their society and culture.

One criticism of collaborating with professional craftspeople, according to Wood (2004), is that they lack teaching experience and do not communicate their knowledge to students in schools effectively; the student's ability to adapt and innovate depends on the flexibility of the craftsperson with whom they work. But in this research the weaver who

collaborated in the teaching transferred knowledge and taught the techniques of *Alsadu* to students in an interesting way and dealt with classroom management easily. Once they gained the basic craft skills from her, they were in a position to develop and adapt them to suit their own needs. Since art teachers in Kuwait do not have the necessary skills or capacity to transmit traditional crafts in ways that students can understand, I concluded that, for the present, they will have to continue to collaborate with practising crafts people.

In reflecting on the curriculum unit at this stage in the research, I concluded that its strengths were the detailed lesson plans, choice of a suitable craft and materials as content and the extensive amount of cultural information included in the teachers' notes.

However, a weakness was that the notes did not explain the weaving process clearly enough and gave teachers only a general idea of how to weave. In their present form, these notes did not provide an adequate basis for teaching *Alsadu* craft skills and more detailed instructions would be needed before the curriculum could be implemented again.

When Houghton (2000) researched students' views on crafts in English and Welsh schools, he found that they liked learning from demonstrations. Initially, I asked the weaver if she had ever taught traditional weaving to primary school students using authentic materials. She answered "No, because this is difficult for this age group". I was not convinced by her answer, because in my experience, this age group does not find this difficult and likes using craft materials. The action research proved her wrong, in that the students produced excellent results, which greatly impressed her, not to mention the teachers. Specifically in two lessons, the students had learned to recognise eight *Alsadu* design motifs and weave two of them.

Dalton (2001) notes that art education in British schools has had an important part to play in constructing female identities. I am sympathetic to this in principle, but suspect that it

is harder in some ways to achieve this in Britain than in Kuwait, where school children are segregated by gender. In my view, it is important to include artefacts in the art curriculum that help girls to construct female identities; and this can be done by studying traditional women's arts and crafts in school. Introducing *Alsadu* into the Kuwaiti national curriculum unit proved to be a good choice for achieving this aim since it helped the female students concerned to understand the position of their gender in Kuwaiti society. If I had implemented this unit in private schools which are co-educational, it would have been much more difficult. My initial research into *Alsadu* established that this form of weaving had always been restricted to women and was always considered shameful for boys. However, there are many traditional men's crafts in Kuwait, such as shipbuilding and *bisht* (weaving men's cloaks) and boys could be encouraged to learn these in the future.

It became clear during the research, and most of all from the pretest and post-test data, that weavers are not considered artists in Kuwaiti society and are discriminated against because they are women. According to Shreeve (1998), it is the case that "those activities that are deemed to be men's work are valued, whereas those of women are ignored" (p.41). Mason (2005), writing about housewives who made crafts in Brazil, stated that the women in her research:

... were recognized as experts in their crafts by other people in their communities but did not consider themselves 'artists'. But their crafts gave them enormous pleasure and they were adamant they should be taught in schools (p.263).

Ideally, traditional women's crafts ought to be included in school art curricula whatever the students' gender, but I agree with Southwell (1997), another British art educator, that crafts are an essential aspect of the history of women and girls and that they have a right to learn their own history. On reflection, it was clear that these students had understood

that *Alsadu* played an important role in women's lives in traditional Bedouin society, was valued and was part of their feminine cultural heritage. I understand craft knowledge, as represented by *Alsadu*, to have been important and useful in this regard. Moreover, acquiring practical craft skills builds confidence and encourages habits of hard work. A finding of Mason's Brazilian research (2005) was that:

women today still value 'feminine-identified crafts' like sewing, for psychological and social reasons; for developing creativity, self-confidence, a sense of accomplishment and self-reliance, for heritage transmission, enriching family relationships and enhancing family life (p. 265).

This research revealed that this holds good for some female students in Kuwait also.

Feminist art educators in America and Britain, such as Dalton (2001) and Shreeve (1998), Southwell (1997) and Mason (2005), might find *Alsadu* weaving a useful way of challenging their female students' imaginations and enhancing their self-esteem. The Kuwaiti students in the present research learned simple beginners' skills in a form of weaving that was particular to their culture; they set up a loom, made a warp and weft and then completed a small piece of flat weaving followed by a pattern called *Al Dallaha*. Students in other countries could do the same. The content of the new curriculum unit aroused these girls' interest and initiated some stimulating discussion about women's crafts. This research could be a first step in Kuwait in expanding the art curriculum in the direction of more women's crafts in future so as to develop female students' understanding of the position of women's art in society. All the action research team members were pleased that the curriculum unit had enabled their female students to make useful things which met their own everyday needs and agreed that teaching Kuwaiti culture this way has potential. They concluded that the content of the lessons and teaching/learning strategies had increased their female students' understanding and

appreciation of the role of women in Bedouin culture and society. They liked the resulting practical work and were surprised by its quality.

My research at the *Alsadu House Museum* established that only a limited number of weavers still remain, most of whom were more than sixty years old. Among the students, we discovered a few with the potential to become *Alsadu* weavers in future, there by ensuring the continuity of this craft. If the practice of this weaving is not encouraged, how else will the tradition continue to exist? I understand that this problem cannot be solved entirely through art education in schools. Still, the curriculum unit developed in this research could be viewed as a first step in informing educational and cultural policy makers about the problem and encouraging them to recommend that school children learn about it either in schools or in workshops organised at *Alsadu House Museum*. When we finished the last lesson, several students asked if there was any chance of continuing the work.

7.2.1. 2. The importance of museum visits

Many Western scholars, including Durant (1996), Epstein and Trimis (2002), Kerlavage (1995) and Lund and Osborne (1995), argue that museums are important learning resources even for very young children, because the museum setting is specially designed to encourage them to interact with works of art in meaningful ways (Durant, 1996; Epstein and Trimis, 2002; Kerlavage, 1995; Lund and Osborne, 1995). As Miller observes (1998), museums not only collect but preserve and display objects of all kinds, not fine art alone.

During my first year of study for this project, I observed groups of primary school children working in the British Museum Education Department in London and it was

evident that these visits motivated them to explore, investigate and study objects and images. It was my reading and personal experience of visiting museums and galleries in the UK that first alerted me to the benefits of such visits, where it was clear that children enjoy this way of learning the history of art and about culture. Although the Kuwaiti school curriculum does not promote museum visits, this action research persuaded me that it is essential to include them in the art curriculum. It confirmed that museums are a vital resource for the historical and cultural learning around which the research questions revolved and facilitated all the other strategies included in the curriculum unit. The next section of the chapter discusses my findings at the end of the research about why such visits are so important for cultural learning in greater depth.

Western literature on museum education stresses the importance of the museum environment for helping visitors and students to discover their cultural heritage. Muffoletto (2001), for example, points out that museums are visual repositories of history, culture and knowledge and that the cultural artefacts in their collections give visitors a sharper sense of their place in time. It identifies many other reasons why museum collections are a valuable learning resource for schools. For Chapman (1978), taking children to museums and galleries is valuable because it enables them to look closely at the detail of authentic artefacts. Hickman (2001) states that it is always best to experience artworks by looking at, handling and touching authentic examples as much as possible. For Marshall (2002) and Burkhart (2006), first hand experience of artefacts is beneficial because it gets students to think about and reflect on their experience of and attitudes towards them. A particular strength of the museum visit in the present research was that it is one of the few places the visitors could see authentic examples of *Alsadu* crafts and experience them at first hand. At the end of the curriculum experiment, the action research team members all agreed that art teachers in Kuwait ought to enrich the

existing curricula by using community resources such as museums and other field-trip sites on a regular basis.

In America and Britain educational policy is in place to promote school visits to museums and galleries for the purposes of exploring and investigating their collections. In the UK this is stated in the official national curriculum document for art. Chapman (1978) suggests that organising their collections thematically is helpful for the development of children's own artwork. I followed her advice to teachers to instruct students to look closely at their artefacts and ask questions and think about them, with the aim of interpreting their meanings. Searching for objects of similar form is another possible activity that she suggests for inspiring student artwork. A finding from implementing the second lesson at the *Alsadu House Museum* was that the students did observe the artefacts there closely, think about, investigate and research them. They answered the questions on the worksheets satisfactorily, joined in group and whole class discussions and asked questions about the artefacts, all of which helped to ensure that the museum visits were a success.

In many ways, the *Alsadu House Museum* in Kuwait was an ideal environment for school children to explore and investigate traditional artefacts. The students involved in this research studied authentic crafts there at first hand, drew them and asked questions about their design, provenance and function. During the visits, they thought about and investigated their formal and aesthetic qualities. When they shared and discussed their drawings and ideas with each other and the teachers, they reflected on how they had been made and on their age, symbolism and meaning in traditional Bedouin society. In other words, both aesthetic and historical/cultural learning were achieved quite easily in this environment. On the aesthetic side, students learned about the visual appearance and

design of the objects: on the historical/cultural side they picked up some knowledge of their historical and cultural context.

The design of this lesson was especially influenced by Chapman's view that investigating museum collections gives children unique opportunities to learn about art in society. As she suggested, it offered them the chance to actively build meaning and was a stimulating and responsive learning environment, in which they could interact socially, follow individual interests and build on what they already knew.

Not all the children succeeded, so I suspect the amount of learning that takes place in a museum always depends on the particular situation, the collection, the part played by teachers and the impression that the exhibits make on individual students. Although I ended up convinced of the benefits, I also understood that the museum, teacher and students themselves play a large part in whether the learning is successful or fails. In this research, the lack of accurate historical and cultural information about the artefacts in the collection and inadequate preparation by one of the teachers in the action team impacted negatively on student learning. Moreover, the *Alsadu* museum collection has not been systematically researched and documented and the lack of access to accurate historical and cultural data about the artefacts was the most significant obstacle. On reflection, I realised that this problem was much bigger than the absence of labels and supplementary information at this one museum. At the time the research was carried out there were no museum educators anywhere in Kuwait and no historical research into traditional crafts. In addition, art teachers were not trained in art history or educational ways of using museum visits.

Piscitelli *et al.* (2003) suggest training teachers to act as museum guides. He recommends that "Before the visit, adult guides should be trained to use high quality interaction strategies to support children's involvement, enjoyment and learning in the museum

environment” (p.54). On reflection, I think it would be helpful if teacher trainers in Kuwait prepared teachers to carry out this function. They could be instructed in ways of engaging children with museum collections and encouraging them to investigate artefacts by themselves, discuss their findings with each other, and pose good questions. All this would help to promote learning about Kuwaiti cultural heritage in interesting ways.

Because museums and schools do not collaborate in Kuwait, the responsibility for liaison in this research was entirely mine. I made direct contact with the weaver; paid her a fee for visiting the schools; and signed a form at the museum to authorize the school visits. I managed to obtain permission from the three education authorities to provide buses for journeys to and from schools to the museum. This all took time and would not be feasible for practising teachers with a full timetable. Hence it became clear that educational and arts policy makers must be alerted to the need to formalise relationships between museums and schools, and make it easier and less time-consuming for teachers to take students on educational visits. As the British art educators Amidu (2001) and Herne (2006) suggest, museums and galleries also need to stretch their tentacles further towards the community and make more of an effort to establish contact with schools.

7.2.2. Questioning enquiry strategy

Chanda (2007) notes that questions are central to teaching art history: she suggests that teachers and students inquire into sources of evidence, the methods and reasoning being used to gather and analyse data and formulate interpretations of artworks and artefacts. Mary Erickson’s enquiry method of teaching art history (1993) features the student-led visual investigation of specific examples of artworks which was adopted in this curriculum experiment, followed by discussion and questioning. The results confirmed that combining student-led enquiry with the classroom discussion sessions is indeed a

useful approach. But this research added peer group discussion to Erickson's method. The students picked up some historical knowledge from the discussions with each other as well as with their teachers and the weaver. Unfortunately, since no one had any art historical training, some information may have not been accurate. Erickson's method encourages students to investigate artworks through drawing and making notes. In this research the students studied and investigated *Alsadu* at the museum, individually sitting down on the floor and looking at the artefacts very intently, drawing them, making notes and answering questions on a worksheet. They acquired some knowledge about the artefacts from their drawing and notes. Although I found the method helpful, I had to adapt it to the situation in question and develop skills in learning, discussion and questioning.

Kuwaiti students are not accustomed to discussing and debating ideas with peers or teachers in class, but this research convinced me that discussion combined with teacher questioning is a very important teaching-learning technique. In the curriculum unit, the teacher team combined: (i) investigation, drawing and making notes, (ii) small group discussion with peers, and (iii) whole class discussion with them in which questions played a key role in a way that makes the learning about cultural artefacts effective.

The students participated in small group discussions about their findings with their peers and without their teacher, in Lesson two in the museum and Lesson three in the classroom, when they played the card game. In Lesson two, after they had investigated *Alsadu* artefacts individually, they discussed their findings in small groups for around ten minutes. Afterwards, the teachers asked each student to tell her group what she had discovered and answer any questions they might have. As they did so, the teachers walked from one group to another, listening. They were impressed by how well the students exchanged ideas, posed questions and offered possible explanations of the

artefacts' functions and meanings. It was clear that they learned from each other and the small size of the groups seemed to encourage individuals to join in discussion. One problem was that, although they all appeared keen to report their findings, a few students' view tended to dominate. Maybe they were the most enthusiastic or had learned more. Nevertheless, all the teachers in the action team concluded that it worked well to get students to talk about an artefact in peer groups after they had studied them individually.

All the lessons included some whole class discussion led by the teacher. When the students shared and discussed their own drawings and ideas with the whole class, much of the learning that took place was historical and cultural; for example, when they speculated about possible functions of *Alsadu* crafts, their provenance, symbolism and meaning in traditional Bedouin society, or what made them useful and distinctive. According to Paris (1997), when children exchange and discuss ideas in this way it stimulates their imagination. The action team judged the students' presentations to the whole class and the whole class discussions successful because they enabled the findings from their individual investigations to be shared and gave the students a chance to question, express and justify their own views. The students appeared attentive and showed respect for each other's opinions during these exchanges. In the discussions, student learning was pushed and extended through combining questioning with sharing ideas.

Although sharing information in student-led presentations after discussion was a new experience for everyone involved, taken as a whole the enquiry questioning strategy facilitated learning about both art and the cultural heritage.

After reflecting on the data about the questioning enquiry strategy from this part of the research, I realised that it cannot promote historical and cultural learning in a constructive way unless the art teachers have researched the artworks being studied and their cultural contexts before such exchanges of information begin. In the whole class discussion at the

Alsadu museum, I provided students with some of the basic historical knowledge about the artefacts that I had acquired beforehand and was not available to them from any one else. It was clear that informed teachers are crucial for the success of this kind of learning.

It was clear also that observing and drawing artefacts alone mainly develops artistic understanding, and these students only started to pick up historical knowledge through the group and whole class discussions. When the teachers led the whole class discussions the intention was that they would communicate historical and cultural knowledge about *Alsadu* weaving, using the information included in the notes in the curriculum materials or that they had discovered for themselves.

Another lesson that I learned about the role of teachers in whole class discussions is that they play a very important role in the questioning enquiry strategy. When one teacher led discussions, the debate was fruitful; when the other did, it was not. The successful teacher provided the students with information that in other circumstances might have been provided by a knowledgeable museum expert. She gave them some historical facts and had enough previous experience of discussion to activate it by asking stimulating questions that encouraged the students to think. But the other teacher's input was so limited that the students hardly gained any cultural or historical knowledge. Instead they discussed art concepts, such as shape and colour. I suspect that this was mainly because she had neither researched *Alsadu* herself nor read the teacher's notes, or perhaps she was unfamiliar with discussion. Naturally it was easier for me to lead discussions about the artefacts because I had researched the curriculum. I concluded that not many art teachers in Kuwait could use the questioning enquiry strategy without prior knowledge of the craft gained through research or the prepared curriculum materials/teachers' notes. But in the second implementation the teachers did not use the notes in the curriculum unit very much.

According to Al Hurwitz, Madeja and Katter, (2003), whether or not questioning is a successful educational tool depends on two teaching skills: (i) the teachers must be able to frame questions with sufficient breadth and depth to cover the topic under discussion; and (ii) they must be able to respond to the students' subsequent questions in ways which help them to understand it. This research confirmed that teachers have a very important role to play in the questioning/enquiry method and need to be skillful at posing questions. Every lesson in this curriculum unit included whole class discussion, and whether or not it was effective depended to a very great extent on the nature of the teacher's questions, since they dictated what was to be learned. The article, *The In-Depth Studio Approach: Incorporating an Art Museum Program* has different ideas about what kinds of question teachers should ask. Foreexample, Trimis and Savva (2004) argue that teachers should pose questions which encourage children to recall their own experience. They suggest that art teachers encourage children to extend their dialogue by composing imaginative stories about artworks and prompt them with questions such as 'Why do you like it?' and 'What do you like about it?'. Marshall (2010) thinks that their questions should challenge students to think through their own ideas and connect them with others'. His examples of useful questions to ask about artefacts include, "What is this like?" and, "If this is like that, then what does that mean?" (p.19).

After I completed the literature review, I thought that using Pointon's open type questions (1997): 'What?', 'Where?' and 'Who made the work?', would be useful and assist children to study and understand the artefacts. Smith (1987) also recommends the use of who, what, when, where and why type questions, for describing and analysing and interpreting individual artworks. Writing about studying artworks as historical documents, Rayala (1995) suggests that teachers should guide learning through such questions as

‘Who made it?’, ‘Where did it come from?’, ‘What does it look like?’, ‘What does it mean?’ and ‘What is it for?’.

I included similar questions on the worksheets that the children used for individual investigating artefacts at *Alsadu House Museum*. Worksheets are a new idea in Kuwait, they are very important as I have suggested. I picked up the worksheet idea in England. The one used in this research contained 14 questions in total, including the following: ‘Can you describe it? What does it look like?’ ‘What material was it made from?’ ‘Where does your chosen artefact come from?’ ‘Where was it made?’ and ‘What was it used for?’ After the empirical research I concluded that such questions contributed significantly to achieving a greater understanding of the cultural heritage.

These rather open questions are important because they informed the discussions, and were a good way to encourage students to think about the artefacts in the museum. Asking questions well and skillfully is very important because it opens up students’ thinking. Asking good questions at the right time motivates students’ interest in a topic and gets them to think about it. The curriculum unit included enough information about *Alsadu* for the teachers to present to students, but the discussion would have benefited from their having increased their knowledge of the craft by researching it themselves.

After the small-group discussions at the museum, the teachers organised ten-minute wholeclass discussions on particular questions. Some questions were included in the lesson plan and some were their own. When I led the discussions at the museum, I asked the students what they had learned about the materials, patterns, meanings and function of the *Alsadu* artefacts from studying them themselves. I asked them to give reasons for their responses based on evidence from their own observations and visual records. Most of the questions were open-ended, because they were intended to encourage the students to formulate their own opinions, think imaginatively, and infer and offer multiple answers,

eventhough these could be only speculative. I realise that, without access to more extensive information about a collection, students achieve only a rather superficial cultural and historical understanding of objects, people and past societies. Still, any discussion of traditional artefacts is helpful in Kuwait, where there is no art historical research and the cultural heritage is not a curriculum topic.

In conclusion, the art education and material culture expert, Bolin (1992/1993) sums up current opinion about questions on “the makers and viewers/users [of artefacts] i.e., questions about those who make, use, respond to and preserve them” (p.154); he finds these especially important.

In their final evaluation of the curriculum unit, the action team agreed that the questioning enquiry strategy had been overall an especially effective one for cultural learning, in that it had transmitted some cultural knowledge which could not have been acquired merely from individual observation and visual studies of artefacts. Including the questioning/enquiry method of studying artworks in the curriculum unit had extended the usual Kuwaiti strategy of whole class discussion; by introducing small group discussions also, followed by student presentations of their own ideas. But throughout all these procedures the teachers’ questions were crucial in encouraging the students to think about the cultural heritage.

7.2.3. Findings about using sketchbooks

My preliminary investigation of methods of teaching art in Britain and America established that sketchbooks are often considered an important tool for learning in art. Leach (2005) describes them as a sort of storage system for sets of visual and verbal observations, ideas, evidence and information which children can retrieve and use later in

their craft, art or design work. Robinson, Mountain and Hulston (2011) suggest that they should be used for (i) observational drawing; (ii) collecting and recording information and writing notes and recording facts; (iii) reproducing images, and drawing; and (iv) personal reflections on a wide range of educational activities, not only museum visits. Piscitelli *et al.* (2003) state that the most important educational function of sketchbooks is to improve students' drawing and observation skills. They note that drawing in sketchbooks extends and refines children's observation skills and slows them down so that they take a closer look at objects (p. 35). In this research, I used all these ideas to help students learn more about *Alsadu* artefacts.

Morgan (1993) points out that "artists and designers keep sketchbooks for very good reasons, filling them with collections of drawings and annotations because it helps their thinking to find out and build up relevant source materials for their own work" (quoted in Leach, 2005. p.34). Important points made by Robinson (1999) are that sketchbooks focus on process rather than finished pieces of artwork and that both should be assessed. She explains that sketchbooks record an individual student's thought processes and remind them of important steps in their progress (p.68). All the articles that I read by international art educators on this topic convinced me that sketchbooks are important in enabling students to document their personal responses when they look at other people's artworks, experiment with art materials and techniques and then refer back to them to develop their own artistic concepts. Thus, sketchbooks motivate students to make art and to become involved in the process of study and evaluation (Robinson, Mountain and Hulston, 2011). I wanted the students who participated in this research to discover things about traditional artefacts for themselves, not least because I knew the *Alsadu* museum did not provide much information about its collection.

It was clear from the literature review that Western art educators understand sketchbooks as a central tool for art learning and all the functions mentioned above proved beneficial in this research. If students in Kuwait use sketchbooks at all, as a general rule, it is for drawing and painting only, not for writing down notes and ideas. At the outset, most of the students participating in this research simply sketched in them the artefacts in the museum until the teachers emphasised the need to answer the questions on the worksheets and write notes. I did not expect them to change their way of working all at once and they needed plenty of encouragement and guidance to use the sketchbooks as the literature suggested. The students used their sketchbooks not only to sketch and make notes about the artefacts in the museum, but also to record visual and verbal information in every lesson, for example, from the film and their discussions with teachers, peers and the weaver. Given the circumstances, most students used them well as a tool for researching *Alsadu*, and in particular for recording the patterns and their symbolism. However, I was disappointed that they did not use the information and sketches in them to help them design their own *Alsadu* pieces at the end.

As noted previously, in Lesson two, some students sat on the floor near their chosen artefact in the museum to examine and draw it, while others stood up. It was clear that a significant amount of art learning was taking place because a great deal of information was being recorded about their designs, colours, shapes and patterns. The action team concluded that combining drawing and writing in this way helped the students to concentrate on looking at the artefacts, observe more details and probe their historical and cultural context.

7.2.4. Collaboration with the weaver

I was influenced by Chapman (1978) to invite an expert weaver to work with the students. Since I suspect that most children in Kuwait know very little about artists, or the outcomes of their efforts, I felt that they should be given as many opportunities as possible to meet, observe and talk to local artists, craftworkers, designers and architects. Although introducing artists or craftworkers into classrooms is commonplace in Britain and America, it was another new strategy in Kuwait. Chapman (1978) argues that getting a professional to talk to children is the best way to get them to think about the role of art in society and facilitate an understanding of the artistic heritage. She believes that talking about works of art is more interesting for them if they meet someone who makes them.

During this research, one of the few remaining practising weavers of *Alsadu* came into the schools to teach weaving and talk about her craft. One reason that she was invited to do so was to provide the action team with some of the missing historical and cultural knowledge about the collection in the museum. When she visited the schools, she told stories, based on her professional experience, about her mode of artistic production and life. Her use of storytelling to describe her craft proved to be an effective method of communicating knowledge about it. As Piscitelli *et al.* point out (2003), children are familiar with storytelling at home and school; stories bring images and objects to life and give students the opportunity to feel, express and discuss many feelings and emotions. Story-telling proved to be an effective learning strategy in this research and on reflection I am surprised that art teachers do not use it more often. It was clear from the students' behaviour that they were motivated by the weaver's authentic stories about her art form and they asked her interesting questions about it. The action team agreed that receiving first-hand knowledge from a professional craftsperson is extremely beneficial. She

communicated much important knowledge about *Alsadu* in an interesting way and demonstrated effective practical skills.

7. 3.0. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Action Research Method

According to Cohen *et al.* (2000), a research design is governed by the principle of ‘fitness for purpose’. Similarly, Bell (1989) proposes that the selection of a methodology depends on the subject to be tested, the data required and the future purpose of the research. I used the action research method, even though it has only rarely been applied in Kuwaiti schools, because I considered it the best choice for the curricular focus of research. As Cohen and Manion state, action research takes the form of a case study and involves a small scale “intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention” (1994, p.186). As a teacher myself, I liked the idea that educational research should embrace the notion of the ‘teacher as researcher’ and elected to work in collaboration with other teachers to test out a new curriculum in schools and analyse and evaluate the results. The methodology that I adopted was based on the theories of Elliott (1991) and Carr and Kemmis (1986). I organised four cycles of action and collaborated with art teachers, a curriculum expert and a weaver in Kuwait in Cycles three and four on testing out and evaluating a curriculum model that I had designed. In my view, it was essential for us to put the curriculum into action and evaluate it collaboratively so as to determine its strengths and weaknesses pragmatically before the research questions could be answered and recommendations made for future policy, practice and research.

7. 3.1.Benefits of the method

According to Bassey (1995, p.6), there are three categories of educational research:

theoretical research, *evaluative* research and *action* research. I chose the third, because it involves research into practice and is carried out by practitioners in real life situations and, because I wanted to improve the art curriculum in Kuwait.

In the course of the research I played three very different roles: researcher, curriculum designer and teacher. As a researcher, I investigated theories about teaching cultural heritage and instructional methods and studied a traditional artefact in Kuwait. I played the role of curriculum designer when I devised the curriculum model and teaching materials for Kuwaiti schools. I played the role of teacher, when I taught the team how to do action research and when I tested out the curriculum myself in schools. I acted as a researcher also when I observed other teachers implementing the unit and organised and led the professional development workshops and evaluation meetings; and when I reflected on and evaluated the results and posed and answered the research questions.

I understand that some teacher researchers may find it difficult to play all these roles at more or less the same time. Oja and Smulyan (1989) have pointed out that

Teachers involved in ‘insider research/evaluation’ activities see themselves first and foremost as classroom teachers. Their first loyalty is to the pupils and to their subjects. The problem of time for insider research tends to be viewed as a teaching vs. research dilemma, which gets resolved in favor of the former. In other words, teachers’ primary responsibility is to the pupils they are teaching and the syllabus that they must cover (p.20).

But in this research I found that these three roles supported each other. Because I already had ten years’ experience of teaching girls of the same age in Kuwait, I did not find the participating students difficult to manage; and because I had designed the curriculum unit

myself, it was relatively easy for me to teach. I understood the learning objectives and concepts and was highly motivated to experiment with the new instructional strategies.

I found that combining the roles of curriculum designer and researcher more difficult, mainly because I had never played the former role. I had to design the curriculum unit without the help of anyone else in the team because art teachers in Kuwait have little or no experience either of doing research or of designing curricula. Not surprisingly, I experienced difficulty in writing specific lesson objectives and it took some time to learn how to formulate them clearly. The first time the curriculum was implemented, some of the objectives had to be changed or removed, because they were too broad, or students found them difficult to understand. Some vocabulary had to be altered: for example, 'artwork' was replaced with 'artefact' and 'handmade work' with '*Alsadu* artefacts.' Some objectives were unrealistic: for example, expecting students (i) to have learned how to value the cultural heritage and natural resources in Lesson one, or (ii) to complete the task of creating artefacts based on cultural heritage in Lesson six.

As a researcher I observed classes in one school and museums in London, and two schools in Kuwait. This was very important, because it enabled me to actually see curricula in action, and it benefited me to be present and see the action unfolding in front of me. I also conducted several interviews, with the class teachers in the UK and the weavers in Kuwait; I asked them if I might record the interviews. As Patton (1990) points out, the tape recorder proved to be a versatile, transportable tool which held a great deal of data with ease and successfully preserved an entire conversation. After the interviews I transcribed and progressively analysed the data to determine recurring themes. Indexing the transcripts enabled me to easily access data later, when typing them up.

The last stage of the research, when I had to step back from being a teacher, reflect on all the findings and build relationships between theory and practice, was also difficult for me.

However, undertaking further reading at this point was helpful and my understanding of the research role improved as a result.

7.3.2. Benefits of action research for curriculum development

I adopted a collaborative action research approach to curriculum development. The curriculum unit that I developed and tested out sought to address an educational aim which is missing from primary education in Kuwait and resulted in the creation of a model and teaching materials which are novel and unusual.

When the curriculum was being implemented in schools this research drew in particular on Elliott's cyclical model (1991) of action research, in which each cycle undergoes a process of action, observation, reflection and evaluation and is followed by more action and reflection. When a Turkish educator, Sezgi Sarac-Suzer (2007), experimented with the action research method, she noted that the focus on learner-centred, innovative classroom applications in curriculum development had the effect of improving the language, cooperation and collaborative work of the teacher team. I concluded that one of the main benefits of using this method was the opportunity it gave some practising teachers to test out and refine a new curriculum in their workplaces and consider its strengths and weaknesses. Burns (1999, p.13) has suggested that the strength of teacher collaboration in action research is that it: (i) enhances opportunities for the results to feed back into the educational system; (ii) encourages teachers to work cooperatively as a research community, sharing common problems and examining existing assumptions, values and beliefs about their work; and (iii) has the potential to instigate group processes and collective pressures to challenge policies and practices. Using the action research method was beneficial because it gave me an opportunity to meet and collaborate with other colleagues working in the same field. After each lesson, we examined and evaluated the

lesson plan together and discussed the values and beliefs implicit in my curriculum design, all of which helped me to develop and evaluate the model.

Stenhouse (1975) strongly believes that curriculum development should be based in practice. For Knight (2001), also, “a good curriculum takes place through communities of practice in which group work and peer evaluation are normal, interpersonal contact is common and networks of engagement are extensive” (p. 377). For Hall (1995), this view of the curriculum requires teachers and students to read about and critically evaluate ideas and plans during the teaching/learning process, review them and choose to adopt some of them, according to changing needs and contexts (p. 135). In this research, I found that not all the teachers involved were able or willing to involve themselves in critical evaluation to the same degree, but in general they did their best to help me implement and test the curriculum unit.

7.3.3. Problems reflecting on practice

In 1983 the American philosopher Donald Schön stated that reflection on action acknowledges the implicitly recognised thinking that accompanies it. It constantly interacts with and modifies practice in such a way that learning takes place. He viewed the concept of reflective practice as a reaction against utilitarian ideas of teaching, where the teacher is viewed merely a technician who implements knowledge produced by others (Schön, 1983). Although this was a new idea to me at the start of the research, reflection on action played a key role in the evaluation and reformulation of the research problem in the present study. As a consequence I understand it now as a significant means to gaining self-knowledge, both as a teacher and a researcher.

As Susi (1995) points out, looking back on what has happened in reflective practice helps practitioners to analyse practical problems and evaluate their decision making and then to improve performance. Directly after each lesson, I sat down with the teachers and listened to their comments before we evaluated it. Reflecting on the lessons in this way helped me to understand the weaknesses in the curriculum design and think about ways to improve it. The whole process of using the action research method forced me to think deeply about evaluation I several times revised the assessment and assessment criteria that I had developed and was using.

After implementing action research for the first time, I am beginning to understand the important role that reflection plays in the professional development of teachers. In this research, as Parsons and Brown (2002) recommend, the teacher participants tried to work together to develop, evaluate and reflect on the curriculum model, with the result that the processes of critical self-reflection, self-evaluation and group discussion improved and developed as the study proceeded.

To conclude, reflection played a key role in the evaluation and reformulation of the problem that I identified for investigation in this research and is an important way of gaining self-knowledge for all teachers involved in curriculum research.

7.3.4. Collaboration

Even though I consider reflection very important, I learned that success in action research depends on a great many other factors, and in particular on the quality of the collaboration. For Carr and Kemmis (1986), action researchers should “merge their separate identity and collaborate with teachers in a common effort to resolve educational problems and improve educational practices” (p. 127). The collaborative team in this

research group had never worked together before and this was the first time they had exchanged ideas about their experience of education.

It was difficult, however, to secure collaboration with schools in the UK. At first, I planned to observe lessons at four primary schools and interview eight primary teachers, but I discovered that it is difficult for international researchers like me to get permission to visit schools and observe and interview teachers in the UK.

The collaborative aspect of the action research process in Kuwait tested some of my deeply-held assumptions about curriculum aims, content and instructional strategies.

Sharing my findings, discussing the research method, explaining my interpretation of the data and considering different forms of them with an action team was a learning experience. The new questions that emerged from discussion forced me to explain and consolidate my ideas better. The collaboration with the teachers and professional weaver meant that I was able to look at the research data through multiple lenses. This made me more confident that the curriculum was effective and can be disseminated to other schools in future.

In principle, I came to agree with Knight (2001) that teachers are the best people to test new curricula because they work in the school environment on problems which affect students directly. I strongly agree also with the claim made by Schwab (1960) that teachers are 'reasoning persons' who should play a major role in determining the curriculum. I concluded that adopting action research in teacher education in Kuwait would be beneficial because it would give teachers the power to bring about significant changes in student learning. Although this was the first time that they had participated in action research, the teachers concerned told me they appreciated having a chance to trial a new curriculum and ask questions about it and that this had significantly increased their awareness of their own classroom practice.

However, the collaboration did not always work well. It was hard for me to deal with one teacher who did not put much effort into the research. On reflection, it is possible that I was too idealistic and this may also explain why I occasionally interfered with what happened in her classroom. One example of her poor collaboration was her lack of preparation for a preliminary planning meeting (see Chapter Six, p. 197). Another was her failure to alter her studentseating arrangements as required (Chapter Six, p. 223). Moreover, she could not teach the lesson content in the museum properly because she had not read the lesson plan (see Chapter Six, p. 214). I had expected to encounter some difficulties of this kind, because participating in the research added to the teachers' busy workload. But for the most part I was excited to collaborate with other teachers delivering a curriculum unit that I had designed and enjoyed implementing it. Nevertheless, when I got to the reflection cycle, I found it difficult at first to reflect on my own findings and those of the team in a constructive way so as to come to some trial conclusions.

7.4. Alterations to the Curriculum Model

In the second chapter of this research, I reported on how I used Western writings on art education to develop a conceptual framework for teaching art history in Kuwaiti primary schools, with particular reference to the work of Erickson (1993), Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001). The aims and objectives for studying the artistic heritage and learning about art in society in the curriculum unit that were developed in this research are similar to those outlined by Chapman. The content (traditional artefacts) was influenced by Chapman, among others, together with the instructional strategies of meeting local artists (craftworkers) and involving students in the close observation of authentic artefacts at a museum. The use of the questioning/enquiry method of teaching art history to study the artefacts which emphasised student-led investigation, questioning and discussion was

based on the work of Erickson. The decisions to include art making and introduce sketchbooks were influenced mainly by Hickman's ideas.

The conceptual framework for the curriculum model that I developed at the end of the literature review is represented in the diagram below (Diagram 2).

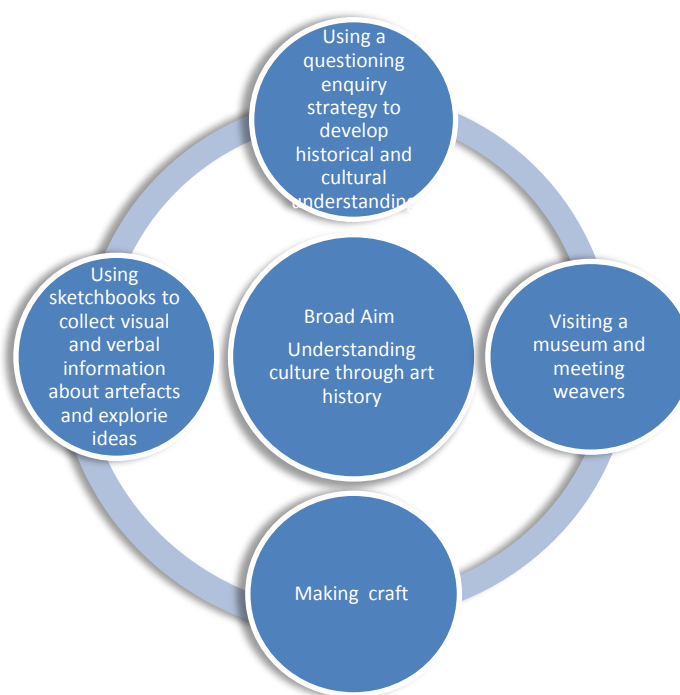


Diagram 2: Curriculum Model for Teaching Art History and Cultural Heritage (Original).

After the curriculum had been implemented twice and evaluated in different schools in Kuwait; this conceptual framework was modified for a number of reasons. First, I realised that the aim of understanding the cultural heritage had to be more specific. I realised that the model had to be clearer to make the content clear and came up with a second version, to which I added the content of *Alsadu*. The content needed to be focused more closely on investigating and making a traditional craft, because I faced difficulties in obtaining accurate art historical information. Visiting the museum and craft making eventually played a more important part in transmitting knowledge of the content, then I had

anticipated. I also found that the discussion part of the enquiry method combined with teacher questioning was very important and needed to be emphasised. Craft making was a very successful learning strategy which was not specified in the original model. Although using sketchbooks to collect visual and verbal information about artefacts and explore ideas was a helpful learning tool, I realised that it was not the most important strategy.

This showed me that the curriculum framework required modifications. Hence, after the formative evaluation of the unit I revised the diagram of the model, as shown below:

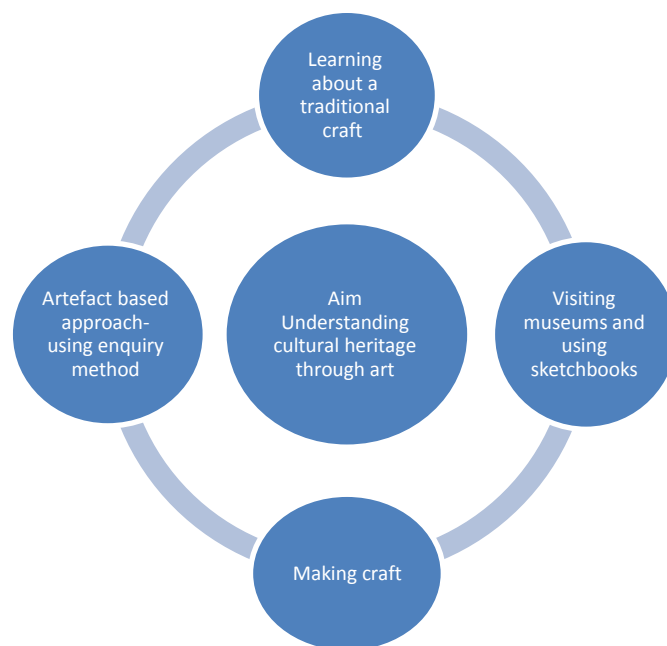


Diagram 3: Curriculum Model for Teaching Cultural Heritage through Art (Revised).

Specifically, the model was altered as follows: making a traditional craft was included in the content. The artefact-based approach to learning and the use of Erickson's enquiry method were emphasised. The strategies of visiting museums and sketchbooks to support the learning were included.

CHAPTER EIGHT: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.0. Introduction and Research Questions

In this chapter, I synthesise the findings of the research as a whole. I try to answer the research questions and discuss the contribution of this study to theory and practice in art education. Next, I reflect on the methodology and I also explore the implications of the findings of the study for future research and for the policy and practice of art education in Kuwait and my own future teaching.

During the research project and through the different stages in the actions taken after the literature review, I made constant slight changes to the design. The original research questions were reduced in number and finalised at the end of the literature review. In this chapter I try to answer them and to determine the contribution to knowledge made by the research.

These were the revised questions that the research sought to answer:

1. How can the theory and practice of art history and cultural education in Western countries be introduced into the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait?
2. How can the traditional women's craft of *Alsadu* be taught in such a way that it demonstrates its relevance to students' lives today?
3. Will using a questioning/enquiry instructional strategy and a sketchbook to study artefacts, together with a museum visit and

collaboration with an artist, achieve the learning objectives and my overall aim?

4. Is action research an appropriate way of trying to change the art curriculum in Kuwait?

8.1. Findings and Conclusions

8.1.1. How can the theory and practice of art history and cultural education in Western countries be introduced into the Year Five art curriculum in Kuwait?

The review of Western literature on art history established that most of the American and British accounts of the academic discipline. These agreed that at its core it involves learning about cultural heritage and that it is important to include it in art education in schools.

More specifically, the literature review carried out at the start uncovered many views and definitions of art history. It was clear that most art historians spend their time gathering factual information about artworks, interpreting their meanings and investigating the artists who made them and the historical period in which they were made. I found that art history, in its broadest sense, is a sub-section of history devoted to studying a particular kind of human activity, namely, the making of artworks or artefacts. Of the many definitions of the term, Greer's view (1987) proved to be the most helpful for this research, because he argues that artefacts are an important source of knowledge about a society's history and culture. He emphasises that historical knowledge is derived from an investigation of primary source materials or data and argues that studying an artwork, artefact or craft closely and considering its relationship to other visual forms brings insights into history and culture.

The literature offered many reasons for including art history in art education; the one highlighted in the present research is that it can facilitate learning about culture. The definition of culture adopted was the one proposed by the American art educators McFee and Degge (1961), who define it as “the pattern of interaction within a group of people” that is “determined by people’s shared values, beliefs and opinions on acceptable behaviour” (McFee, 1961, p.17). It is also informed by the definition in Ballengee-Morris *et al.* (2001) of the cultural heritage as ‘what people have inherited from the sociocultural group they belong to’ (p. 26).

Recent literature on teaching art in America and England focuses especially on cultural diversity. This contrasted with my own research interest in teaching and learning about my national cultural heritage. I understand McFee and Degge’s point (1997) that the art curriculum ought to become more culturally diverse so as to reflect the cultural diversity of society and schools in America, but for the situation in Kuwait, it was more appropriate to increase our students’ awareness of their own national cultural heritage, because of current policies for society and for government schools. Nevertheless, I found I was able to adapt Western theory and practice about multicultural art education so as to create a curriculum unit which focused on culture and on learning about a traditional Kuwaiti craft. A new lesson content, that of *Alsadu*, was developed and tested out, together with a combination of Western instructional strategies to discover their potential for introducing historical and cultural learning into the art curriculum in Kuwait. A conclusion therefore is that recent ideas about culturally diverse (or multicultural) art education in the international literature can be applied to teaching national culture in Gulf States such as Kuwait.

The concept of cultural identity became more and more important for me during this research I did not incorporate it to begin with, but became deeply interested in the concept

of national culture. The artistic and cultural heritage in Kuwait is complicated to unpack because the history of the nation as such dates back only to the 17th century. Thus it is problematic because the concept of Kuwait's cultural heritage refers to a time before this. It is very important to investigate further the meaning of the national cultural heritage of Kuwait because it is often misguidedly limited to considering only the territory occupied by the modern Kuwait. In fact the people and their cultural heritage come from a wider geographical area. *Alsadu* for example is a traditional Bedouin or Arab craft, practised by the ancestors of some Kuwaiti nationals today who are spread across the entire Arab region. Since culture in Kuwait today is influenced by a great many artistic traditions from all over the Gulf area, it is difficult to point to one of them as being truly unique to Kuwait.

Nevertheless, the following key points emerged from the implementation and evaluation of my curriculum model and require consideration if it is to be developed further and used in other Kuwaiti schools. The participating teachers said that the content was easy for students to understand, although it depends on the knowledge and skills of individual teachers to succeed. First, it is clear that these teachers need to provide their students with some historical information about Kuwait and its people, together with basic information about the physical environment of the Kuwaiti desert, none of which has been taught before in art classes. Second, the word *culture* is notoriously problematic and the teachers and their students are likely to have different views about what it means. Third, after completing the research, I concluded that, although it is possible to introduce the idea of cultural heritage into schools in this way, teachers ought to be trained in analysing with students concepts such as culture and identity, before the students consider examples of cultural heritage such as *Alsadu* in class.

During this research I developed a curriculum model for Kuwaiti schools that drew on Western theory and practice of art historical and cultural education. Some curriculum materials for teachers were tested out and evaluated. The conclusion was that this new model was successful in: enabling students in Kuwait to begin to understand their national culture; raising students and teachers' awareness of the need to maintain traditional crafts; and contributing to building the participants' sense of their personal and national identity.

Transferring educational theories and practices from one part of the world to another are not easy. But this research showed that it is possible to introduce recent Western art and art education theory into the Kuwaiti education system, provided it is adapted sensitively. From the literature that I reviewed, I adopted Chapman's ideas (1978) about teaching the art heritage as a way into increasing students' understanding of the national culture. But I found that including traditional artefacts cannot help students to do this properly unless these items have already been the subject of research. When I first designed the curriculum unit, I had hoped to teach art history as understood in the West, but found that this was impossible for various reasons. The theory and practice of art history, as taught in Britain and America, could not be applied in Kuwaiti schools because the country has no experts in art history and little historical research. A finding from this curriculum experiment, therefore, was that teachers in Kuwait need much more historical information about their nation and concepts such as *cultural heritage* and *identity*. However, I concluded that introducing the study of a specific art tradition into the art curriculum is a good way of encouraging teachers and their students to begin to consider, appreciate and understand their cultural heritage in general.

Among the most interesting questions I had to ask myself during the research was 'What is the relationship between art historical and cultural learning?' At first, I identified a huge gap in the art curriculum in Kuwait in terms of art history as it is theorized and

practised in Western countries. But when I was forced to think about teaching it in an alternative way, I reached the conclusion, important for the international art education community in general, that the literature does not pay enough attention to ways of linking the learning about art history with the learning about culture. I tested out Erickson's enquiry method of teaching art history and focused the content of the art curriculum on traditional artefacts and the women weavers who made them. But I had to establish for myself a relationship between teaching art history and cultural learning during the research in order to achieve the overall aims of the project.

I concluded that it is only possible at present to design art curricula around the aim of increasing students' awareness of cultural heritage in Kuwait. It was clear to me by the end of the research that current theory and practice in art historical and cultural education in Western countries cannot be transferred directly into Kuwait's Year Five curriculum at the present time. The Western teaching/learning strategies that I read about at the start all had to be adapted in practice to fill the gaps discussed above.

To conclude, this research added to Western theory about art education by showing: first, that it is possible to use recent multicultural education theory, adapt it for the Kuwaiti curriculum and make it work. Second, that this theory identifies a gap in the international literature of art education about ways of linking the teaching of art history and of culture. Western literature assumes that students will come to understand their own culture if art history is included in the art curriculum, but in Kuwait teachers do not have access to any art historical information about art and artefacts or to historical research.

8.1.2. How can the traditional women's craft of *Alsadu* be taught in such a way that it demonstrates its relevance to students' lives today?

From reading Western writings on women's art, I learned that in the past boys and girls had had different kinds of art lessons and that the lesson content had played a key role in helping to understand and form their male and female identities and their roles in society. This was one reason why I understood it as important to introduce a traditional women's craft into the art curriculum for girls in Kuwait. But this decision was also influenced by the writings of British and American feminist art educators such as Dalton (2001), Southwell (1997), Shreeve (1998) and Mason (2005).

Dalton (2001), for example, states that women's art in schools has had and still has an important part to play in constructing students' roles in society. I became interested in the idea that teaching crafts in a gendered way can help female students to understand their feminine cultural identity and social role at the present time, just as it has done in the past.

Thus my main reason for introducing a traditional women's craft into girls' schools in Kuwait for the first time was that I wanted female students to understand the important role that Bedouin women played in Kuwaiti society in the past. Both the Western and Arabic literature about the craft of *Alsadu* emphasises the fact that the Bedouin women who created it made a vital contribution to Bedouin society as a whole. As noted above, they were responsible for most of the work that underlies human survival in the desert. While the men were away earning money or herding camels, the women herded and looked after the goats and sheep, at the same time as bearing and caring for children, preparing meals and making goats cheese and other provisions from animal fat. They also created the tents and all the furnishings: rugs, cushions and dividing curtains, together

with all the gear for the camels. They did the physical work of setting the tents up and taking them down throughout the migrations (Royal Scottish Museum, 1985).

The central position of women in Bedouin society in the past is graphically demonstrated through *Alsadu* weaving. Any woman who had outstanding skills as a weaver was celebrated. Their tribes and families described them as *Al dhefra*, (meaning ‘victorious’) and afforded them great respect and praise (Crichton, 1989). Thus it is clear that all the Bedouin desert nomads valued women’s work very highly. These women worked very hard and their contribution to society was as important as that of the men. They played a central role, because they did everything necessary for maintaining the home and this was crucial to the survival of their family and tribe. At this time, Kuwaiti society depended on both men and women to carry out their separate tasks efficiently and if the women had not worked hard in this way, tribal life would have broken down.

However, as noted in the introductory chapter, the lifestyle of most Bedouins changed around the year 1930 with the discovery of oil, when many of them moved away from the desert to lead a different kind of life in urban areas. Most Bedouins in Kuwait today live in houses in cities and towns. Moreover the forces of modernisation and consumerism and the development of the nation state have led to significant changes in gender relations and job opportunities, all of which have impacted on their lifestyle (Al Sabah, 2001). The role of women in Kuwaiti today is neither as distinctive nor as central as it was in the past and their situation is sometimes confusing. Whereas they continue to have important domestic functions as wives and mothers, caring for husbands and children, and although they still play a strong domestic role, this kind of work is not as valued as it used to be. Despite the increasing numbers of working wives, the Islamic attitude to married women is more traditional than in modern Western societies, in the sense that the husband is understood to be the bread winner and women are valued primarily for their role in the home.

As I have said, one of the main reasons for choosing to introduce this particular craft into girls' schools was to emphasise the important role that Bedouin women used to play in Kuwaiti culture and society and contrast it with the less demanding lifestyle of women at the present time. Moreover, I hoped to convince other female art teachers of the need to connect art education with the nation's past and to encourage young girls, in particular, to assess their contribution to society past and present.

A good reason for teaching female students about women's traditional crafts is the confusion that some young women feel about their role these days. I am persuaded by Dalton among others that including women's crafts in the school curriculum can help girls to appreciate their female role and women's contribution to society in the past (Dalton, 2001). I realise of course that there are huge cultural differences surrounding issues of gender in Kuwait and in Western countries. In a newly developing nation such as Kuwait, where boys and girls attend separate schools, it is too early to try to teach the same kinds of crafts to both genders. From the Western literature, also, I learned that teaching the same craft in mixed schools today does not always work, because they are still linked in the popular imagination to differentiated social roles. In addition, the curriculum in Kuwaiti schools does not encourage the discussion of male and female gender roles and I understand women as less valued in present-day society than in the past. I hoped that the knowledge transmitted by the curriculum unit about the role of Bedouin women would encourage modern girls in Kuwait to appreciate their own strengths and the contribution they might make.

Western art education literature about teaching crafts in schools was an important influence on my thinking about craft practice. This literature suggested that the best way to learn a traditional craft such as *Alsadu* is to listen to and watch the makers themselves (Chapman, 1978). This research found that discussion and listening to craftspeople was

indeed a very successful teaching approach, because the female students took them as role models. Moreover, during the research I discovered that, although these traditional skills had not been written down, they had been passed on in speech and action from one group of weavers to another. Since most of the remaining weavers were old, a further conclusion at the end was that teaching a traditional craft in schools to try to ensure its continuity is also a good reason for doing so (Karppinen, 2008). The region which is now called Kuwait has experienced huge social change over a short period of time, but introducing a traditional women's craft into the art curriculum in schools offers one way of bridging the very wide gap that exists between past and present.

In my view, a particular strength of this research was the discovery of an educational strategy that prevents students from dismissing a traditional craft as old-fashioned. I believe that craft knowledge, as represented by *Alsadu*, is useful and important for helping students to meet the functional needs of everyday life. Karppinen (2008) states that crafts play a significant role in displaying skillfulness. I concur that acquiring practical skills is of great importance for students of primary age, because it builds confidence and encourages the habits of hard work, and also enables them to acquire a kind of skilled knowledge that is unique to themselves. But a key problem in teaching young people traditional crafts is that they tend to dismiss them as irrelevant to present day life (Burkhart, 2006). Yet crafts do not belong to the past alone although they may need to be brought up to date. This curriculum experiment succeeded in persuading the girls who participated in it that *Alsadu* is still useful. They created new functions for the woven designs when they used them to make or decorate artefacts that they could use in everyday life. This added considerably to its value in their eyes. This was confirmation therefore of Burkhart's theory (2006) that traditional crafts gain in value if they are taught in a way that shows that they are relevant to life today and can be related to

people's present needs in interesting ways. Dalton (2001) confirms that women's crafts in textiles, for example, are still interesting to girls as practical skills. I found that introducing a traditional women's craft and using authentic materials in connection with new functions for the present day made the lessons even more interesting for the students. The choice of *Alsadu* was particularly successful in this regard precisely because it encouraged them not only to celebrate but also to practise a traditional women's craft. Once they had learned the required skills, they used them to make things that they themselves needed and wanted to use.

Crafts are not understood as art in Kuwait or given the same status as in some recent Western literature on art education. Kuwait associates crafts with everyday, practical skills only. However, art lessons in schools have often involved a much wider range of practices than painting, sculpture and drawing (Dalton, 2001). Dalton (2001) states that art education has meant different things (including different content) at different times, and at the end of this research it was clear to me that both art and craft require skill; both are reflections of the culture in which they are made and help students to understand their culture. So they should both be included in the school art curriculum.

According to the literature on this topic the teaching of women's crafts in art education is neglected in the West and the situation is the same in Kuwait. I understand that seeking to adopt educational theories and practices from other countries sets up philosophical tensions, and it is not possible to transfer Western ideas about women and crafts to Kuwait directly, without modification. First, Western societies deal with issues of gender in a different way. The idea put forward by some art educators in the West (e.g., Mason, 2005) that women's crafts are forms of art and should be taught as such in schools would be difficult to put into practice in Kuwait, for reasons noted previously; However, the most important cultural difference and the one which caused the most problems in this

research is that the two societies do not share the same attitude towards the importance of history or the past (Southwell, 1997). At the present time, people in Kuwait take very little interest in their art heritage or anything to do with the nation's history. Finally, the third problem that arose in trying to introduce Western ideas (Karppinen, 2008) is that it is more important in the West than in Kuwait to appreciate and make crafts by hand so as to continue a tradition in danger of disappearing. Society in Kuwait is rushing to modernise and acquire new technologies and people do not value or purchase handmade objects; they buy what they need instead of making things and prefer Western consumer products.

At the end of the research I realised that the choice of a traditional women's craft as curriculum content for art lessons was even more significant than I had anticipated at the start. The research showed, however, that it is not difficult for children in primary schools to connect a traditional craft with life today and to value it, so long as it is introduced into the art curriculum in an engaging way.

8.1.3. Will using a questioning/enquiry instructional strategy and a sketchbook to study artefacts together with a museum visit and collaboration with an artist achieve the learning objectives and my overall aim?

The curriculum unit developed for this research experimented with four art instructional strategies that were new to Kuwait; a questioning/enquiry and discussion method of teaching art history; the use of sketchbooks as a research tool; visiting a museum to study artefacts; and collaborating with a professional craftsperson/artist. The main findings and conclusions about each strategy and the contributions the research has made to existing knowledge in the relevant areas are given in turn below.

8.1.3.1. Museum visits

Western literature on art education asserts that visits to museums are among the most effective ways of delivering cultural and historical learning. The museum used in this research, for all its shortcomings, proved to be the best learning environment available in Kuwait for studying and researching *Alsadu*. Its collection of authentic artefacts was a crucial educational resource for the art historical and cultural learning around which this project revolved. According to Chapman (1978), visits to museums play an essential role in helping students to understand their society and culture, but I found that that not all museums cater for this. An important finding of this research was that, unlike the ones I visited in the UK, museums in Kuwait lack the necessary curatorial and educational expertise to support this kind of learning. The collection of artefacts at the *Alsadu House Museum* had not been systematically researched and documented and no supplementary information on it was available to visitors. While this museum is to be congratulated for collecting authentic examples of *Alsadu* art and displaying them to the public in Kuwait, it would be helpful if they were systematically labelled. Essential educational support materials are missing and this means that the museum cannot fulfill its educational function in the way that Chapman advocates.

Many Western authors whom I consulted on this topic (e.g. Amidu, 2001 and Herne, 2006), encourage schools to setup formal links with museums. In Kuwait the lack of collaboration between schools and the museum made the study visits much more difficult than these writers suggest. Because there is no official system in place for collaboration between museums and schools in Kuwait, it was a finding of this research that art teachers there who take children on school visits face many more difficulties than Western art teachers do. If a visit is to be successful educationally, on top of all their regular work, teachers in Kuwait have to: (i) set up and organise it; (ii) research the

collection in advance; (iii) prepare a lesson and actually teach it at the museum; and (iv) design worksheets for students.

An important finding from this research was that museums in Kuwait are not yet ready to play their full part in education. But even though school museum visits are difficult because educational facilities are under developed the research showed they can succeed so long as art teachers: (i) collaborate with professional artists during visits; (ii) prepare lessons and worksheets in advance; and (iii) use a questioning/enquiry and discussion instructional strategy for studying artefacts with students, together with sketchbooks. In other words, they can succeed if teachers are prepared to do most of the educational work involved themselves.

In this research, the participating students benefited from a museum visit in spite of the limitations mentioned above. The opportunity to study authentic examples of *Alsadu* weaving in the collection was crucial to achieving the learning objectives. However they would not have been achieved if the professional weaver had not adopted the role of museum educator and if the teachers had not employed the questioning/enquiry method and got the students to use sketchbooks to study the artefacts. I concluded that the use of all these strategies in combination were what ensured that the learning actually took place. My observations in British museums had revealed that some educational activities seemed to motivate students more than others. Thus it appears that the museum environment itself is not as important as the nature of the educational programme and activities on offer. The visits to the *Alsadu* museum were successful mainly because of the activities that I developed in advance specifically for the new curriculum model and specified in a lesson plan, together with the weaver's collaboration.

In future I would like to see the staff at *Alsadu House Museum* collect and display detailed, accurate historical information about the artefacts in the collection. I agree with Piscitelli *et al.* (2003) also that it is vital to train members of the public to act as museum guides. It would be helpful if this museum employed a teacher, for example, to carry out the important work of guiding visitors (children in particular) round the collection; this would make school study visits more effective. Although the collection at the museum featured in this research proved to be a vital educational resource for this art curriculum experiment, the museum lacked the necessary educational resources and expertise to support it.

To conclude, this research has added to Western theories about museum education and the goal of understanding society through art by showing, that: museums must have the necessary curatorial and educational expertise to support curriculum initiatives of this kind. Not all museums can cater for this aim. Such an aim is difficult to achieve unless the museum already has an education department, accepts its educational role and holds a well-documented collection. Formal connections between schools and museums are also important. The lack of any formal policy for or system of collaboration between schools and museum makes study visits much more difficult and is counterproductive. In Kuwait it is vital to train teachers to act as museum guides since the museum in this research did not employ an educator to do the important work of guiding visitors on school study visits. Western educational scholars writers do not seem realise that things are not the same everywhere. What they write about may apply only to their own country and they do not appear to understand that conditions may be different elsewhere.

8.1.3.2. Questioning/enquiry strategy

The American literature on art education in particular advocated a questioning/enquiry method of teaching art history. Another finding of this research was that its success depends on teachers being able to demonstrate two main skills: first, the skill to frame questions about art or artefacts to students with sufficient breadth and depth to ensure that cultural historical learning actually takes place through discussion; and, second, the skill to connect with students by responding positively to their own interests and questions. Both these skills are crucial if students are to acquire historical knowledge in this way. Chanda (2007) and Erickson (1993) state that posing questions about artworks is central in learning and teaching art history and I chose to use Erickson's enquiry method (1993), in questions raised during discussion. A finding from the empirical research was that classroom discussion combined with teacher questioning was a much more effective learning strategy than I had anticipated when Erickson's questioning/enquiry method of studying artefacts was tried out in the action research. The teaching method of whole class discussion directed by the teacher, which is the norm in Kuwait, was augmented by the use of sketchbooks, which the students used for researching artefacts individually, followed by discussions in small groups.

Trimis and Savva (2004) advise teachers to pose questions which encourage children to recall personal experiences. As Hurwitz, Madeja and Katter (2003) note, questioning works best if teachers frame questions that help students to consider the content under discussion in depth and if they respond fully to the students' subsequent questions. The research confirmed that these two teaching skills are important. After analysing the data a second time, it was clear that the teachers' questions followed by discussion had played a very important role in the learning and that this kind of questioning/enquiry could be employed in many other kinds of lessons as well. I concluded that this way of studying

artefacts was the single most important strategy for achieving positive learning outcomes and that the group and whole class discussions after the students had completed their individual research were important primarily because they gave them the opportunity to enlarge on their own opinions about the artefacts and exchange information between themselves. In the group discussions, the students shared with peers the findings in their sketchbooks about individual artefacts, and then the teacher communicated important supplementary cultural and artistic information during whole class discussions which increased their understanding and knowledge. I concluded that it would benefit art education if teachers in Kuwait used this approach to teaching and learning in all their lessons and that the Ministry of Education should encourage its use in all school subjects, in view of its proven value in this research.

In conclusion, asking questions about artworks is central to teaching art history, as can be seen from the successful learning through discussion in our lessons. This research added the following ideas to Western theories about the use of questioning in teaching: first, the discussion enquiry method of art historical learning covered many things, such as the use of sketchbooks, student worksheets, talking in groups and whole class discussion. The worksheets played a key role in the discussions, and the sketchbooks, with their drawings and notes were also very important. Second, the questions which teachers pose need to be chosen carefully. In this research the questions about the weavers, Bedouin people and their way of life in the past and about the makers and users of the craft at the present time were especially important. I found that focusing on *Alsadu* in the past and present motivated students' interest in their cultural heritage and women's role in society and led them to think more deeply about these topics.

As noted previously, in Kuwait, most lessons are teacher-led. In this research I introduced the idea of collaborative learning, involving both students and teachers. In this research I

tried out a more student-led approach which gives students an important role in discovering and learning about their cultural heritage and concluded that it is very beneficial. They liked adopting the role of researcher, which was new to them.

8.1.3.3. Collaborating with a professional artist

The decision to invite an expert weaver to teach at the museum and in schools was influenced mainly by the ideas of the American art educator, Laura Chapman. The research confirmed her idea that artists can play a very important role in historical and cultural learning. The students participating in this research knew very little about artists, but the weaver provided them with a great deal of knowledge about their cultural heritage by telling them personal stories and talking about the collection in the museum. There was a sense in which she took over the role of a museum educator in the research.

The collaboration between the art teachers and the weaver in the classrooms was important also for achieving the curriculum aims. She not only taught the students basic weaving techniques and how to make *Alsadu* patterns, but continued to communicate cultural information at the same time, based in her own experience of the craft. Her method of doing this was informative and took the form of storytelling. Piscitelli *et al.* (2003) note that children are familiar with story-telling and the participating students responded well to this. An important finding which I had not anticipated was that story-telling is a very effective instructional strategy for historical and cultural learning.

Chapman (1978) emphasises the fact that students acquire knowledge about art works from meetings with artists, but more importantly in my view, they can learn new art techniques. Professional artists are in an exceptionally good position to teach school children new specialist skills, craft skills in particular. The weaver concerned taught the students the required skills for practising the traditional craft of *Alsadu*, led discussions and talked face to face with them about her life experiences as a craftsperson. Altogether she took a very active part in the teaching as a whole. Moreover the review of the literature about this craft uncovered useful information even though it did not help us to learn the necessary skills to weave *Alsadu*. Collaboration with the weaver was imperative, because neither the participant teachers nor I had any practical experience of it. Not everything can be learned about arts and crafts from books and practical experience is essential for teachers.

At present, the Ministry of Education in Kuwait does not require teachers to upgrade their skills once they are qualified, or provide any in-service training. Although most art teachers benefit now and again from informal professional training carried out in small groups of schools, the ones participating in this research clearly needed to learn the necessary skills to enable them to transmit traditional *Alsadu* techniques to their students. If the professional weavers had not supported the action research team, they could not have taught the practical lesson content in the curriculum unit. The conclusion from this first experiment with the curriculum model, therefore, was that collaboration with weavers is vital, at least until such time as enough teachers in Kuwait have learned these craft skills for themselves.

To conclude, this research adds to Western theory about collaborating with artists, by emphasising that it is valuable because they transfer to students not only knowledge, attitudes and values but also art techniques. However, artists and craftspeople are not

trained teachers and they teach differently. They often communicate with children in schools through story telling which includes personal information and details of their experiences and lives. Children are familiar with storytelling and this research showed it can be a very effective instructional strategy for historical and cultural learning. Where artists are knowledgeable about traditional artefacts, they can play an important role in historical learning when they communicate the part that they have played in the life and traditions of their nation.

8.1.3.4. Using sketchbooks

The international literature advocated the use of sketchbooks for students as a resource for researching artefacts. I read a great deal about sketchbooks at the beginning of the research, and anticipated that they would be the most promising instructional tool for cultural learning. Most writers agreed with Robinson, Mountain and Hulston (2011) that sketchbooks can be very helpful for increasing students' appreciation of artworks and artists, investigating craft processes and products and developing ideas for their own work. But although they were successful in the first two of these ways, the sketchbooks did not help the students in this research to develop their own ideas. When I introduced them into the art curriculum in Kuwait, the teachers and students did not know how to use the notes and sketches in them for this purpose. Thus, more research is needed into ways that students can use them to develop their personal ideas. Broadly speaking, however, even though this was a new experience for both the students and teachers, the sketchbooks were a useful research tool for investigating a traditional craft. The students enjoyed using them and the teachers employed them to good effect as an aid in teaching and learning about artefacts. However, they could have been exploited more. Teachers in

Kuwait need to extend their understanding of the many different ways that sketchbooks are used in art education in Western countries to add to student learning.

The main conclusion about the instructional strategies tested out in the curriculum unit was that they are all important for teaching and learning about cultural heritage and should be combined. After testing them out together, I concluded that the lesson in which the teachers and students had visited *Alsadu House Museum* was the most successful one in terms of achieving the research aims, because all the above strategies were employed together and this contributed to the successful learning that took place.

To conclude, sketchbooks are very helpful for increasing students' appreciation of artworks and artists, investigating craft processes and products and developing ideas for their own work. But they will not be a successful resource for developing a student's personal ideas for artworks until teachers are trained to teach this.

8.1.4. Is action research an appropriate way of trying to change the art curriculum in Kuwait?

The action research method applied in this research was strongly influenced by John Elliott's ideas. Elliott understands it as important to test out an educational innovation more than once and treat each implementation as a separate cycle of action followed by evaluation and revision. For this reason, I first tested out and evaluated the curriculum unit myself and then revised it before I gave it to other teachers to try out and evaluate again. Elliott understands the process of action and evaluation as a never-ending spiral which looks like a coil. This curriculum unit would have benefited from going through more developmental cycles but there was not enough time to implement and evaluate it again in a programme of doctoral research.

Carr and Kemmis (1986) confirm that collaboration among teachers improves educational practice. This study confirmed that collaboration is a very beneficial aspect of the action research method. In this case it gave me, as a researcher, an opportunity to work with a team of teachers and a specialist in education in Kuwait. I concluded that the main reason that working with a team in this way benefits researchers is that it encourages them to look at the research data through many lenses. Collaborating with the team in this instance was very important for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the new curriculum unit. Several opinions are better than one and collaboration reduces researcher bias in the research findings.

Setting up a team in Kuwait to participate in the action research was relatively easy. I asked a colleague who was an advisor in a regional educational authority to nominate teachers and the three whom she selected all agreed to take part. Some Western researchers state that is difficult to set up an action team with practitioners but this research found that it is relatively easy with teachers in Kuwait, perhaps because there have been very few such projects carried out in schools so far.

Schwab (1960) argues that teachers should play a major role in determining the curriculum, but they cannot do this adequately without previous training in curriculum development and evaluation. Teacher training was a more important element of the research than I had expected and I concluded that professional development plays a key role in the action research method. It was necessary to set up and organise two teacher workshops for this team before they implemented the new curriculum in their schools so as to inform them about the curriculum materials for the unit and prepare them for their collaborative role in collecting data about their teaching and evaluating it in the course of the action research.

A strength of the action research method is that it enables a researcher to play different roles simultaneously. Adopting the roles of designer, researcher and teacher in this study gave me a chance to view from different standpoints the curriculum that I had developed. While all the roles supported each other, the researcher and curriculum designer roles were the most difficult ones for me, since they were new.

However, I concluded that the main benefit of action research in this study was that it gave a team of teachers an opportunity to test out and refine a new curriculum in their own classrooms. I now consider this the most effective way to develop and evaluate a new curriculum. Elliott (1991) recommends that the planning should always be flexible to accommodate changes in the path taken by the research between action cycles. I concluded that the main reason why the action research method is so well suited to curriculum development is that it allows researchers enough flexibility to reformulate a syllabus as the research continues into the next cycle.

Although this model of curriculum development and research originated in America and Britain, this study proved it can work well in Kuwait, so long as a suitable team is selected and each member is willing to collaborate. My conclusion was that the action research method would be appropriate for general use in educational reform in the country. In this research a group of teacher practitioners were given an opportunity to test out and evaluate a curriculum unit in schools before it was finalised - a procedure which is unusual in this context.

To conclude, I agree that collaboration among teachers improves educational practice. Collaborating with a team is a very beneficial aspect of the action research method, because it encourages researchers to look at the research data through many lenses; and enables teachers to play a major role in determining curriculum. I found this action research model of designing and evaluating new curriculum very helpful. But in countries

such as Kuwait where a national curriculum is taught that is already prepared by the Education Ministry, it is difficult to implement this model because teachers are not used designing their own lessons and do not know how to evaluate them. Moreover they are not motivated to do it.

8.2.0. Discussion and Recommendations

The broad aim of the curriculum experiment which was the focus of this research was to use art education to improve Kuwaiti students' understanding of their cultural heritage and, in doing so, to strengthen their sense of national identity.

In Kuwait the Ministry of Education is solely responsible for developing the school curriculum and the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters is responsible for maintaining and ensuring the survival of Kuwait's cultural heritage and arts. Therefore, the recommendations for future action arising from this research, which are set out in the following section of this chapter, may be especially important for these two bodies.

8.2.1. Promoting action research

- It would be helpful if an action research approach to curriculum development was introduced into the education system as a whole.
- Art teachers could form action research teams for the purpose of contributing to further changes in Kuwait's educational policies and curricula. It might improve art education and other school subjects if teachers in Kuwaiti schools in general changed their present somewhat passive approach to teaching and took a more active role in curriculum development.

- It would be helpful if teachers were encouraged to develop new curriculum models for themselves and put them into practice. They should participate in designing and developing the national curriculum and be given opportunities to improve their practice by doing so.
- It would be helpful for the future welfare of the subject in Kuwait if curriculum developers attached to art teachers updated their knowledge of theory in the international literature on art education.

8.2.2. Developing a research culture in art education

- More art educators in Kuwait should be encouraged to undertake graduate studies, including doctoral degrees. Over time, this could help to make the curriculum in Kuwait more open to change. It would be helpful also if researchers and teachers were encouraged to participate in international conferences, where they could exchange ideas and information with experts from other countries.
- It would be helpful if the relevant policy makers encouraged research into culture and cultural heritage in Kuwait.

8.2.3. Expanding the aims and content of the art curriculum

- Curriculum policy makers and teachers need to find ways of linking art to cultural learning in ways that will develop the students' sense of Kuwaiti national identity in particular and Arab identity in general.
- Including the traditional craft of *Alsadu* in the national curriculum would be helpful, not only for the above reason but also as a way of replenishing the declining numbers of weavers. The future survival of the craft may depend on today's students acquiring these craft skills in schools.

8.2.4. Enhancing the educational role of museums

- In order to facilitate learning about cultural heritage in schools, it would be helpful if ways were explored to incentivise and encourage teachers to take students on museum visits, by making links with the Ministry of Culture.
- It would be helpful if the Ministries of Education and of Culture collaborated with each other to establish teacher workshops focusing on learning traditional crafts and encourage teachers to gain and develop the relevant skills.
- *Alsadu House Museum* should display more accurate, historical information about its collection and should document and label items to increase visitors' knowledge of these authentic examples of *Alsadu* art.
- It would be helpful also if the museum employed a professional museum educator to guide visitors and children around the collection.
- It would be helpful if the Ministries of Education and Culture worked together to promote the educational role and function of museums in Kuwaiti society and in particular to develop links between museums and schools.
- It is important that art history is introduced into higher education as an academic discipline and historical research into traditional crafts is sponsored.

8.2.5. Supporting traditional crafts

- It is important to encourage people in Kuwaiti society to value traditional crafts and the people who still practise them today. This is especially the case with women's crafts.

- Training facilities should be set up for traditional crafts. They could train more *Alsadu* weavers or encourage interested members of the general public to act as guides for museum visitors.
- Collaboration would be beneficial between the Ministry of Education and the Council of National Culture on setting up workshops for members of the public interested in ensuring the continuity of traditional crafts.

8.2.6. Including art history in higher education and commissioning art historical research

- The apparent absence of expertise in art history in Kuwait was a serious problem in this research. Art historians may need to be recruited from other countries for the present, therefore, to contribute to the preservation of Kuwait's heritage. They may need to include research into museum collections so as to provide more accurate historical information about them and their place in Kuwaiti history and culture.
- It is vital to introduce the academic discipline of art history into higher education in Kuwait. Until this happens, art historians may have to be recruited from abroad to investigate the country's art heritage and collaborate with cultural and educational policy makers, practitioners and museum staff.

8.2.7. Including professional development courses in teacher education

- All teachers in Kuwait would benefit from regular in-service training to develop their teaching skills.

- Teacher training colleges could run in-service training courses for serving teachers. In-service training should be offered before any new curriculum is introduced into schools.

8.3. Suggestions for Future Research

From the international studies on the topic, I learned that art history is well established in schools and successful in many Western countries. But it may not be possible yet to include it in the art curriculum of relatively new nations such as Kuwait. In many developing countries, it may be necessary first to introduce scholars to the academic discipline of art history.

The present research as a whole has contributed generally to existing knowledge about: (i) teaching the artistic heritage, (ii) curriculum development and (iii) the action research method.

A methodological challenge for introducing cultural learning into art lessons throughout the world is to find ways to develop successful teaching/learning strategies for studying traditional crafts, as well as fine art.

Specific recommendations arising from this particular study are that more research is needed into:

- The place of artefacts in teaching art history.
- Creative ways of linking art history with cultural learning in art education in schools.
- Designing curricula for teaching other Arab crafts. The choice of cultural material, in this research, succeeded in introducing historical and cultural learning into the art curriculum but focused on only one example of a traditional Arab craft.

Since the education system in Kuwait separates schoolchildren according to gender and this research was designed for girls' schools, I did not experience any objections to teaching a women's craft. It would be much more difficult to experiment with teaching women's crafts in mixed schools, whether in Kuwait or in the West. I would like to conduct more studies into other kinds of traditional male Arab crafts to find out if this helps boys to understand their culture heritage also.

8.4. Personal Statement

This study was a substantial personal achievement for me because it extended my thinking both about educational research methods and curriculum development. Despite the tensions I felt in taking on the role of teacher/researcher, the research process was compatible with teaching and had a positive impact on my development as a teacher. Two of the most significant changes in my practice during this intervention are that I have become more organised and reflective and my evaluative skills have improved. Reflecting systematically on other people's teaching, together with my own, has enabled me to question my choice of curriculum content, the ways in which I try to motivate children and the guidance that I offer them to extend their thinking. Most importantly, I have gained a repertoire of strategies for teaching art history and cultural heritage. As a result, I feel strongly that a cultural perspective on art education is important for all art educators in Kuwait. I anticipate that the knowledge and experience gained from this study will inform and enhance my practice as an art teacher, educational advisor and researcher. To further develop my own teaching and understanding of teaching cultural heritage, I intend to embrace the teacher/researcher model again and investigate Kuwait's cultural heritage further. In future, I want to introduce a traditional men's craft and determine how willing

boys in Kuwait would be to learn it. Would they be as happy as the girls in this research were to learn a traditional craft?

In conclusion, I feel that I have learned much from conducting this research and realise that my previous approach to teaching was simplistic. I felt I had no power to choose the art content of my lessons and did not pursue broad curriculum aims such as the study of culture; I used the same rather limited instructional strategies and content too often and rarely introduced crafts.

This research has given me the confidence to choose the lesson content that I judge important and taught me how to develop and design a curriculum. I have learned how to add new instructional strategies to the Kuwaiti national curriculum and how to teach a traditional craft using skills which the present curriculum ignores. After I have submitted this thesis, I will try to publish articles about it in international educational journals and give papers at conferences. I will also try to publish the curriculum that I developed for this research as an e-book, so as to communicate the research findings within Kuwait and to art educators all over the world.

Glossary

Artefacts: something made or given shape by man, such as a tool or a work of art
(Collins English Dictionary, 2012)

Alsadu: traditional Bedouin weaving (from the Arabic ‘extend’ or ‘stretch and spread’)

Craft: typical skilled knowledge form that is conjectural and expressed in the form of making and doing (Gardner, 1990).

Culture: pattern of interaction between a group of people who share the same values, beliefs and views on acceptable behaviour, play roles in common and work together
(McFee, 1961).

Kuwaiti culture: the way of life, beliefs and systems of knowledge and representations of people with Kuwaiti origins.

Cultural heritage: Meanings which attach the present to the past, referring to the knowledge from the past for groups of people within specific contexts, social, political and cultural (Graham, 2002, p. 1003).

Curriculum: a set of knowledge and topics from a content area (Blenkinet al, 1992).

Identity: How individuals see and define themselves and others see and define them
(Brown, 2008).

National identity: a kind of collective identity which gives allegiance to the nation
(Cinpoes, 2008, p.4).

Glossary of Bedouin terms

Aein: literally, ‘the eye’, a weaving design which creates the effect of eyes peering out of the material.

Al gadhae: desert tree with hollow twigs, which always grows slowly.

Alkhurj: saddlebags to carry essential items.

Almajlis: men's sitting room.

Al sader: desert trees with long twigs.

Al tarfa: tamarisk tree.

Argoon: Kind of annual wild plant with yellow flowers, used to obtain a yellowish orange dye.

Bait al sha'r: black tent made of sheep's wool and goat hair.

Basat Hanbali: all-over pattern for rugs based on triangular shapes, made by a northern tribe called the Hanbali.

Dalla: literally, 'coffee pots'. Usually woven in black and white, this design requires two contrasting colours to give a horizontal ribbed effect.

Dhefra: literally 'victorious', used to describe women who were skilled in spinning and weaving.

Dhurus el-Khail: horses' teeth pattern.

Girn: horn of gazelle, used in intricate designs, such as *Shajarah* or *Uwairjan*.

Haram: literally, 'forbidden' to Muslims.

Hubub: design used in weaving a warp face with a plain weave structure, most often using black and white threads.

Kurkum: turmeric.

Mazawed: storage bags to hold household and personal items such as cookware, food, clothes and implements.

Meghzal: Woollen hand-spun yarn, for which a thin stick with a whorl and hook attached to one end, is needed as a drop spindle.

Midhkhar: weaving pattern, warped, with an odd number of dots and always in three colours, red and white dots on a black background.

Qati: tent divider or the dividing curtain in a tent.

Regum: design technique, formed by binding or wrapping warp threads together, which always uses bright reds, oranges and blues.

Safayet: gear for camels and horses.

Shajarah: tree pattern, the most complicated design used by Kuwaiti *Alsadu* weavers.

Uwairjan: a weaving pattern with a single vertical row of pyramids, using two colours, red or white dots on a black background.

Wasm: mark used by the ancient tribes, or the shape of a brand used by nomads on camels and cattle.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Observation checklist in School

Teacher's name:

Date:

School:

Class:

Number of students

Title of lesson and Length of lesson:

Lesson preparation	
Objectives	
Lesson Content	
Teaching strategies and mode of delivery	
Organization of content/timing	
Resources (images, books, museum, etc.)	
Evaluation of student learning	
Evaluation of the instructions for the lesson	
Changes need to the lesson plan	

- Notes:

Appendix A (Arabic)

نموذج المراقبة في المدرسة

التاريخ :

اسم المعلمة :

المدرسة :

عدد الطالبات :

عنوان الدرس:

مدة الدرس :

	1. الإعداد للدرس
	2. الأهداف
	3. محتوى الدرس
	4. أساليب التدريس
	5. تنظيم و توزيع المحتوى/ الوقت
	6. المواد المستخدمة (صور, كتب, متحف... إلخ)
	7. تقييم تعلم الطالبات
	8. تقييم إرشادات الدرس
	9. التغييرات التي يحتاجها الدرس

الملاحظات:

Appendix B

Interview Questions for primary teacher in the UK

1. What kinds of visual resource materials do you use in your art lessons and how do you use them? Please explain.
 - ii. Illustrated Books.
 - iii. Websites.
 - iv. Student images.
 - v. Original artworks:
 - a) Your own art works.
 - b) Students' art works made in previous years.
 - c) Any other.
2. Please name some artworks or visual resource materials you actually use? Where you get them from? Could you show me some examples?
3. Do you teach any art history? Do you think teaching art history is important?
 - Yes / No.
 - Could you give me some reasons for your answer?
4. Which of the following instructional strategies do you find helpful to introduce are historical content into your lessons?
 - i. Showing videos, slides, photos.
 - ii. Teachers' guides.
 - iii. Whole class discussions.
 - iv. Small group discussions.
 - v. Examples of lessons on the internet.
 - vi. Sketchbooks.
 - vii. Museum visits.
 - viii. Workshop visits to artists' studios.
 - ix. Any other.
5. How useful do you think sketchbooks are in art teaching in general?
6. Do you or could you use them for teaching art history, and if so how?
7. The literature I have been reading suggests that art history has great value for the following reasons: it can help students to (i) understand their own culture and

heritage and that of others (ii) appreciate artworks, (iii) develop critical thinking, and (iv) build knowledge of art and of important human? What do you think about these aims? Do you agree with them? Which one do you think is most important and why?

8. How can we make art history relevant and interesting for students today? How can we link it to their everyday lives? What in your view is the best way to do this?

9. How do you evaluate student learning in your art lessons? Please explain how you do this to me in detail.

Appendix C

Checklist observation in museums

Date: Year / Grade: Museum/Gallery:	
1. Participants Year / Grade: Numbers, gender: Educator/teacher: Title of picture: Time and length:	
2. Materials and tools Sketchbook/handout:	
3. Teaching and learning activities Question/answer:	
4. How teachers encourage students to developing design ideas?	
5. What do teachers do to encourage students to explore and develop their imagination and ideas?	
6. Does the students discussion/ observational sketch/ making note/ sketchbook?	
7. How long do teachers give students to observe and look at images?	
8. Miscellaneous notes	

Appendix D

Guidelines for studying artist (crafts workers) and artworks (artefact)

(Adapted from Stuhr, Petrovich-Mwanki and Wasson, 1992: Curriculum guidelines for the multicultural classroom, *Art Education* 45 [1] 16-24).

1. Questions for interviews with weavers

General information

Name.....

Date and place of birth.....

Gender.....

Current address.....

Artistic production

1. How did you learn to do weave *alsadu* weaving? How old were you?
2. Who taught /influenced you?
3. How was *alsadu* used? What was it used for?
4. What kind of materials did you use in the past for sewing, dyeing and spinning? Where did you get them from?
5. What materials are you using at present? Where did you get them from?
6. What aspect of *alsadu* production is the most important: process, product or symbolic significance in the past? Why?

Socio-cultural context

7. What ethnic affiliation(s) do you have?
8. Did your tribal identity influence your *alsadu* weaving? If so, how?
9. Why is weaving as a craft limited to women only?
10. What kind of patterns and colours did you weave and use in the past? Have the woven patterns and colours changed lately or are the designs the same as they used to be in the past?
11. Is there any social significance of your *alsadu* weaving? If so what?
12. For whom did you weave in the past and for whom in the present? For what reason?

Environmental

13. Did your geographical and or physical environment influence your weaving? If so, How?
 14. Did the weaving has special time or season for weave it in the past?
-

2. Questions to address in studying the form(s) of the artefact

1. In which tribes was tribal culture *alsadu* produced?
2. Identify and describe the geographical features of the region/place inhabited by the producers of *alsadu* craft(s). In what ways did climate, landform and natural resources affect the weaving?
3. In what time-period was *alsadu* weaving produced?
4. Describe the stylistic characteristics of *alsadu* craft?
5. What was its function in the culture?
6. What aspect(s) of the cultural aesthetic production is/are most important: process, product or symbolic significance?
7. What was the social significance of *alsadu* weaving?
8. What were the aesthetic values of the culture?
9. What are/were the weaver's age and social status?
10. How were girls selected to become weavers?
11. How were they trained?
12. For whom do/did they produce the weaving?

Appendix E
Pre-test/post-test questionnaire, Cycle Three

Questions for Students

1. Do you learn history of art in your art class?

Please check one answer:

- ☐ Yes / No.
 - If yes, do you like to learn it?
 - ☐ Yes/No/I do not know.
- Please give reasons for your answers.

2. What does the word 'culture' mean?

3. Do you learn about the culture of Kuwait in School?

- ☐ Yes/No.
 - If yes, do you like learning about it?
 - ☐ Yes/ No/ I do not know.
- Please give reasons for your answer.

4. Do you know anything about the cultural heritage of Kuwait?

- ☐ Yes/ No.
- If yes, what do you know about it? Please write down three things.

5. Has your art teacher ever taken you to visit a museum?

- ☐ Yes/ No.
 - If yes, which ones?
 - If no, would you like to do that?
 - ☐ Yes/No/I do not know.
- Please check one.

6. Do you ever look at artworks by real artists or talk about them at School?

- ☐ Yes/ No.

7. Have you ever met an artist in real life?

- ☐ Yes/ No.

8. Do you use a sketchbook in your art lessons?

○ Yes/No/Sometimes.

- If yes, what do you use it for?

9. Have you learned a traditional craft in school or at home?

○ Yes/ No.

- If yes, do you like to make crafts?

○ Yes/ No.

Please give reasons for your answer.

10. Do you study or describe artworks in art lessons?

○ Yes/ No.

- If yes, do you like doing this?

○ Yes/No/I do not know.

Please give reasons to your answer.

Appendix E (Arabic)

تدريس تاريخ الفن و الثقافة في المدارس الابتدائية أسئلة للطالبات

1. هل تعلمت تاريخ الفن في حصة الرسم؟

الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة:

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك نعم , هل تحبين أن تتعلميه.

○ نعم / لا / لا أعلم.

الرجاء إعطاء أسباب لإجابتك.

2. ماذا تعني كلمة ثقافة؟

3. هل تعلمت عن الثقافة الكويتية في المدرسة؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, هل تحبين أن تتعلمي عنها؟

○ نعم / لا / لا أعلم.

الرجاء إعطاء أسباب لإجابتك.

4. هل تعرفين أي شي عن التراث الثقافي في الكويت؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, ماذا تعرفين عنه؟ الرجاء كتابة ثلاث أشياء.

5. هل أخذتك معلمة الرسم لزيارة متحف؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, أي متحف؟

- إذا كانت إجابتك بلا, هل ترغبين بذلك؟

○ نعم / لا / لا أعلم.

الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة.

6. هل رأيت أعمال فنية حقيقية لفنان أو تكلمتي عنه بالمدرسة؟

○ نعم / لا.

7. هل قابلت فنان (رسام) حقيقي من قبل؟

○ نعم / لا.

8. هل تستخدمين كراسة الرسم في حصة الرسم؟

- ☐ نعم / لا / أحياناً.
☐ إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، لماذا تستخدمينه؟

9. هل تعلمت حرفة تقليدية في المدرسة أو في البيت؟

- ☐ نعم / لا / أحياناً.
- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، هل تحبين أن تعملي أشغال فنية.
☐ نعم / لا .
- الرجاء إعطاء أسباب لإجابتك.

10. هل قمت بوصف أعمال فنية في حصة الرسم؟

- ☐ نعم / لا .
- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، هل تحبين أن تعملي ذلك؟
☐ نعم / لا / لا أعلم.

الرجاء إعطاء أسباب لإجابتك.

Appendix F

Student worksheet for Investigating Artefacts at *Alsadu House Museum*


- Select objects to investigate in the museum.
- Investigate your chosen object.

Answer these questions:

1. What do you see/observe? (Please comment on such factors as colour, texture, materials, patterns, structure, shape, form and size).

2. What do you think is the most interesting artefact in the museum? Why?

3. Please draw an artefact you find interesting.



4. Why did you choose this artefact?

5. Do you know what its name is?

6. Can you describe it? What does it look like?

7. From what materials was it made?

8. What colours were used?

9. What sizes are *Alsadu* weavings? Are they all the same?

10. What patterns do they have? Draw them please.

11. Where does your chosen artefact come from? Where was it made?

12. What was it used for?

13. How old do you think this it is?

14. What does it and the other artefacts tell us about the people who made them, their culture, the society and technology?

Appendix F (Arabic)

ورقة عمل للطالبات لدراسة القطع الأثرية في متحف بيت السدو

- اختيار قطع أثرية لدراستها في المتحف.
- دراسة القطع المختارة.

الأسئلة:

1. ماذا ترين أو تلاحظين؟ (الرجاء تحدثي عن عوامل اللون، الملمس، المواد المستخدمة، الأنماط، الشكل، الحجم).

2. أي قطعة أثرية في المتحف أكثر أعجبتكي و لماذا؟

3. الرجاء رسم القطعة الأثرية التي ترينها أكثر إثارة.



4. لماذا اخترت هذه القطعة؟

5. هل تعرفين ماهي اسمها؟

6. هل يمكنك وصفها؟ كيف تبدو؟

7. من أي مواد صنعت؟

8. ما الألوان المستخدمة في هذه القطعة؟

9. ما هي أحجام منسوجات السدو ؟ هل هم جميعا بنفس الحجم؟

10. ماهي الأنماط (الزخارف) الموجودة في قطعة السدو التي أعجبتكي؟ الرجاء, ارسمي الأنماط (الزخارف).

11. من أين أتت القطعة الأثرية التي اخترتها ؟ أين صنعت؟

12. كيف كانت تستخدم؟

13. في اعتقادك, كم عمر هذه القطعة ؟

14. ماذا تحكي لنا هذه القطع الأثرية عن الناس الذين صنعوها و عن ثقافتهم و مجتمعاتهم ؟

Appendix H

Agenda for teacher's workshop

Date: Sunday 15/01/2012

Time: 10: 00

Place: Alsabraya primary school for girls.

Programme

- 1. Introduction to the curriculum unit.** *By researcher* (20 minutes)
 - The reasons for doing the research.
 - The problem in art education in Kuwait.
 - The aims of the research.
 - Show images of *Alsadu* weaving.
 - Show *Alsadu* curriculum.
 - Show examples of sketchbooks.
- 2. Action Research.** *By Prof. Rachel Mason* (10 minutes)
- 3. Explanation of the lessons.** *By researcher* (15 minutes)
 - Discuss lesson titles, aims and objectives.
 - Give the teachers lesson one to study.
- 4. DVD.** *By researcher* (20 minutes)
 - Show the educational film about of life in the Kuwaiti desert.
 - Ask the teachers to suggest questions to ask students about what they watched.
- 5. Teacher evaluation.** *By researcher* (20 minutes)
 - Ask each teacher to evaluate lesson one or the film.
 - Show and discuss lesson a report form.
- 6. Show teachers the pre-test and post test Questionnaire.** *By researcher* (10 minutes).
- 7. Show example of student artefacts from cycle three.**

Thank you for your attendance

Appendix H (Arabic)

ورشة عمل للمعلمات

التاريخ : الاحد 15/01/2012

الوقت : 00 : 10 صباحا

المكان : مدرسة الصابرية الابتدائية للبنات.

البرامج

1. مقدمة لوحة المناهج (فاطمة العمير , 20 دقيقة)

- اسباب القيام بالبحث.
- المشكلة في التربية الفنية في الكويت.
- الهدف من البحث.
- عرض صور لنسيج السدو .
- عرض كتاب السدو.

2. عمل البحوث (البروفيسورة / راشيل ميسون , 10 دقيقة)

3. الدرس . (فاطمة العمير , 15 دقيقة)

- عناوين الدرس وأهداف العامة و الخاصة.
- إعطاء المعلمات الدرس الأول كمثال لباقي الدروس.

4. عرض فلم وثائقي. (فاطمة العمير , 20 دقيقة)

- عرض فيلم تعليمي حول تاريخ الحياة في الصحراء الكويتية.
- طلب المعلمات باقتراح بعض الأسئلة للطالبات حول معلومات من الفلم لإضافته إلى الدرس الأول.

5. المعلم التقييم (فاطمة العمير , 20 دقيقة)

- طلب المعلمات عمل تقييم للدرس الأول أو فيلم المعروف.
- مناقشة نموذج تقرير الدرس للمعلمة.

6. تقديم نموذج لورقة تقييم الطالبات (فاطمة العمير , 10 دقيقة)

أشكركم على حضوركم

Appendix I

Evaluation lesson checklist for teacher

Teacher's name:

Date:

School:

Class:

Number of students

Title of lesson and length of lesson:

Objectives	
Lesson Content	
Teaching strategies and mode of delivery	
Organization of content/timing	
Resources (images, books, museum, etc.)	
Evaluation of student learning	
Evaluation of the instructions for the lesson	

- Do you want to changes or add anything in the lesson plan?

Appendix I (Arabic)

نموذج تقرير الدرس للمعلمة

التاريخ :

اسم المعلمة :

المدرسة :

عدد الطالبات :

عنوان الدرس :

مدة الدرس :

	1. الأهداف
	2. محتوى الدرس
	3. أساليب التدريس
	4. تنظيم و توزيع المحتوى/ الوقت
	5. المواد المستخدمة (صور, كتب, متحف... إلخ)
	6. تقييم تعلم الطالبات
	7. تعليمات الدرس

- هل تعتقد أن هناك أي شيء ينبغي تغييره أو إضافته في خطة الدرس؟

Appendix J
Pre-test/ post test questionnaire, Cycle Four

1. What does the word 'art history' mean to you?

2. Did you ever learn any art history?

○ Yes / No.

- If yes, where did you learn this?
- How did you learn it?

3. Do you know anything about the traditional life of Kuwaiti people?

○ Yes / No.

- If yes, what do you know?

4. Have you learned anything about the culture of Kuwait?

○ Yes/ No.

- If yes, where did you learn it, in school or in your home?

5. What did you learn about Kuwaiti culture (For example, about the people, their lives, beliefs, crafts, e.g.)?

6. Have you ever visited a museum?

○ Yes/ No.

- If yes, which ones? And with whom did you visit the museum?

7. Why do people in general visit museums?

8. Have you ever looked at artworks or crafts made by women artists or talked about them?
- If yes, which ones?
-
-
9. Have you ever meet a woman artist in real life?
- Yes/ No.
 - If yes, where did you meet her?
-
-
10. Do any women in your family make things by hand?
- Yes/ No.
 - If yes, what do they make?
-
-
11. Have you ever learned a traditional craft at school or home?
- Yes/ No/ Sometimes.
 - If yes, do you likemaking crafts?
 - Yes/ No.
- Please give reasons for your answer.
-
-
12. Do you use a sketchbook in your art lessons?
- Yes/ No/ Sometimes.
 - If yes, what do you use it for?
-
-
13. Do you like art lessons in school?
- Yes/ No.
14. What do you think is the best way to learn art?
- (By talking about artworks, meeting artists, visiting museum, making artworks, doing research into artefacts).

Please check one or more items above and/or comment below on other ways you think are important:

Appendix J (Arabic)

تدريس تاريخ الفن و الثقافة في المدارس الابتدائية أسئلة للطالبات

1. ماذا تعني لك كلمة " تاريخ الفن " ؟

2. هل سبق لك أن تعلمتي أي شيء عن تاريخ الفن؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم/ أين تعلمت عن تاريخ الفن؟
- كيف تعلمت عن تاريخ الفن؟

3. هل تعلمت أي شيء عن الحياة التقليدية للناس الكويتيين؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت الإجابة نعم/ ماذا تعرفين؟

4. هل تعلمت أي شيء عن الثقافة الكويتية ؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, أين تعلمي عنها في المدرسة أو في البيت؟

5. ماذا تعلمت عن الثقافة الكويتية (على سبيل المثال, عن المجتمع, معتقداته, عن الحرف في الكويت ...ألخ)؟

6. هل قمت بزيارة متحف من قبل؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, أي متحف؟
- مع من ذهبت لزيارة المتحف؟

7. لماذا الناس على وجه العموم يزورون المتاحف؟

8. هل سبق لك أن رأيت أعمال فنية أو حرف حقيقية صنعت من قبل نساء فنانات (رسامات) أو تكلمتي عنها في المدرسة؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم, ماهي الأعمال أو الحرف؟

9. هل سبق لك أن ألتقيتي بفنانة امرأة (رسامة) في الحياة الحقيقية ؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، أين ألتقيتي بها؟

10. هل هناك أي امرأة من عائلتك تعمل أو تصنع الأشياء في يدها؟

○ نعم / لا.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، ماذا تعمل أو تصنع؟

11. هل سبق لك أن تعلمتي حرفة تقليدية في المدرسة أو في البيت؟

○ نعم / لا / أحياناً.

- إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، هل تحبين أن تعلمي الحرف اليدوية؟

- الرجاء إعطاء الأسباب لإجابتك.

12. هل تستخدمين كراسة الرسم في حصة الرسم؟

○ نعم / لا / أحياناً.

○ إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، بماذا تستخدمينها؟

13. هل تحبين حصة الرسم في المدرسة؟

○ نعم / لا / أحياناً.

14. ماهي أفضل طريقة في إعتقادك لتعلم الفن ؟

(الأعمال الفنية، مقابلة الفنانين، زيارة المتاحف، عمل الأعمال الفنية، عمل أبحاث عن القطع الأثرية أو الحديث عن أشياء أخرى مثل:

Researcher diary

1. Introduce new curriculum to teachers
2. Teaching practical craft done in school age

- Take them to approach
- Can't not wait to not

we want to ask
- the role of art and society

Culture, I want them to understand
the role of art in society
Big concepts

know

- when the children did not think about

Culture: They do not think about culture.
 - They do not link art to culture, they
 do not have any connection between

art and culture.

reflexivity

- * reflexivity: reflect
- I need to write about the culture "me"

I found it difficult
I need to go back
reflection.

Appendix L



ETHICS BOARD

TEACHER PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear Art Teacher,

I am a PhD student in Art Education at Roehampton University in the UK. As part of my research I would like to implement and evaluate a curriculum unit in three Kuwaiti primary schools for girls in different education authorities; this would help me produce and critique the curriculum unit.

Title of Research Project: Introducing Art History into Art Education in Kuwait

Primary Schools: An action research approach to curriculum reform.

Brief Description

The research in progress is undertaken as part of the requirement for the PhD for which I am studying. The research methodology is action research and the empirical work will take place in primary schools for girls in Kuwait. I hope to develop the art curriculum for Year Five with a view to helping the students who use this methodology to understand their own cultural heritage better. This research will, among other things, on investigating how to develop the art curriculum in primary schools.

Briefly, I should like to:

1. Implement and evaluate a curriculum unit for Year Five in three primary schools for girls in Kuwait.
2. Implement and document the curriculum unit in collaboration with the art teachers at these schools in order to evaluate it (formative evaluation).
3. Have the curriculum implemented and evaluated in action (summative evaluation) by two other art teachers in different education authorities.

If you would be willing to help me and help me in planning how to carry out these tasks, I'd be grateful if you would email me, so that we can arrange to meet to discuss the project further.

Yours sincerely,

Fatema Alajmi

Investigator Contact Details:

Name: Fatema Alajmi

Department: Education

University address: Roehampton University
Roehampton Lane, London AW15 5PU

Email: alajmif@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 07733843422 (UK)

00965- 99818805 (Kuwait)

Consent Statement:

I agree to take part in this research and am aware that I am free to withdraw at any time. I understand that the information provided will be treated in confidence by the researcher and that my identity will be protected in the publication of any findings.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Dean of School (or if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies.)

Director of Studies Contact Details:

Name: Prof. Rachel Mason

Department: Education

University Address: Roehampton University
University

Froebel College
Roehampton Lane

Lane

Head of Department Contact

Name: Marilyn Holness

School: Education

University Address: Roehampton

Froebel College
Roehampton

5PU

Email: r.mason@roehampton.ac.uk.

Email:

M.Holness@roehampton.ac.uk Telephone: 020 83972 3009

Telephone: +44 (0)20 8392 3374

Co-supervisor Details:

Name: Dr. James Hall

Department: Education

University Address: Roehampton

Email: J.Hall@Roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3272

نموذج موافقة للمعلمة المشاركة

عزيزتي المعلمة:

أنا طالبة دكتوراه الفلسفة في التربية الفنية في جامعة رو هامبتون في المملكة المتحدة. كجزء من بحثي أود تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية في المدارس الابتدائية للبنات في الكويت في ثلاث محافظات تعليمية مختلفة ، لمساعدتي في انتاج وحدة نقد المناهج الدراسية.

عنوان مشروع البحث:

تقديم تاريخ الفن في التربية الفنية للمدارس الابتدائية في الكويت : نهج البحث والعمل لإصلاح المناهج الدراسية.

وصف مختصر للبحث:

يجري البحث في التقدم المحرز كجزء من متطلبات درجة الدكتوراه في التربية الفنية في جامعة رو هامبتون. منهجية البحث والعمل التجريبي سيعقد في المدارس الابتدائية في الكويت. وذلك لتطوير المناهج الفنية للصف الخامس الابتدائي في مدارس البنات بهدف مساعدة الطالبات اللاتي يستخدمن هذه المنهجية لفهم تراثهم الثقافي على نحو أفضل. وهذا البحث للتحقيق في كيفية تطوير المناهج الفنية في المدارس الابتدائية.

لفترة وجيزة أنوي :

1. تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية للصف الخامس الابتدائي في ثلاث مدارس ابتدائية للبنات في الكويت.
2. تنفيذ وتوثيق وحدة المناهج بالتعاون مع المعلمات التربية الفنية من أجل تقييم ذلك (التقييم التكويني).
3. تقييم المناهج الدراسية مرة أخرى (التقييم التراكمي) عن طريق اثنتين من المدرسات فيمحافظتين تعليميتين مختلفتين.

إذا كنت على استعداد لمساعدتي و التعاون معي من أجل تنفيذ وتقييم المنهج يرجى مراسلتي على البريد الإلكتروني حتى أستطيع أن ألتقي بك لمناقشة مشروع البحث.

تفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،

فاطمة العمير العجمي

قسم : التربية

عنوان الجامعة : جامعة رو هامبتون

Roehampton University

Roehampton Lane,

London AW15 5PU

البريد الإلكتروني: alajmif@roehampton.ac.uk

هاتف الباحث : 0044 -7733843422 (المملكة المتحدة)

99818805 (الكويت)

بيان موافقة :

أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث ، وأدرك أنني حر في الانسحاب في أي وقت. أنا أفهم أن المعلومات المقدمة سوف تعامل في الثقة من قبل الباحث والتي سوف تكون هويتهم محمية في نشر أي نتائج.

الاسم :.....

التوقيع :.....

التاريخ :.....

يرجى الملاحظة : إذا كان لديك قلق حول أي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم أو أية استفسارات أخرى ، يرجى تثير هذه المسألة مع الباحث.

ETHICS BOARD

SCHOOL PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear Head teacher,

I am a PhD student in Art Education at Roehampton University from Kuwait. As part of my research I would like to observe and interview primary school teachers about how they teach art history and use sketchbooks, I am also interested in the source materials they use in their art lessons.

Title of Research Project: Introducing Art History into Art Education in Kuwait

Primary Schools: An action research approach to curriculum reform.

Brief Description of Research Project:

This research will investigate how to develop the art curriculum in primary schools. The aim of my study is to improve and reform the curriculum for Year Five to include the teaching of art history and using sketchbooks.

Briefly I intend to:

1. Investigate art historical and cultural learning in the UK and the use of sketch books.
2. Research traditional weaving in Kuwait.
3. Develop a curriculum unit that contributes to Year Five students' knowledge and understanding of their unique cultural heritage and identity and uses sketch books to improve their drawing skills.
4. Test out this curriculum unit in some schools in Kuwait and evaluate it.

If you are willing to help me and let me visit your school to observe the teaching of Year Six teacher, please email me so that I can make arrangements for visiting your school.

Yours sincerely,

Fatema Aljami

Investigator Contact Details:

Name: Fatema Aljami

Department: Education

University address: Roehampton University

Roehampton Lane, London AW15 5PU

Email: alajmif@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 07733843422

Consent Statement:

I agree for the school to support this research, and I am aware that I can choose to withdraw that support at any time. I understand that the information provided will be treated in confidence by the researcher and that the identity of the school and those in the school will be protected in the publication of any findings.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Dean of School (or if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies.)

Director of Studies Contact Details:

Name: Prof. Rachel Mason

Head of Department Contact

Name: Marilyn Holness

Department: Education

School: Education

University Address: Roehampton University

University Address: Roehampton

University

Froebel College

Froebel College

Roehampton Lane

Roehampton

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London, SW 15 5PU

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Email: r.mason@roehampton.ac.uk.

Telephone: 020 83972 3009

Email: M.Holness@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 8392 3374

Co-supervisor Details:

Name: Dr. James Hall

Department: Education

University Address: Roehampton University

Email: J.Hall@Roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3272

نموذج موافقة للمدرسة المشاركة

السيدة المحترمة مديرة المدرسة:

أنا طالبة دكتوراه الفلسفة في التربية الفنية في جامعة رو هامبتون في المملكة المتحدة. كجزء من بحثي أود تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية في المدارس الابتدائية للبنات في الكويت في ثلاث محافظات تعليمية مختلفة ، لمساعدتي في انتاج وحدة نقد المناهج الدراسية.

عنوان مشروع البحث:

تقديم تاريخ الفن في التربية الفنية للمدارس الابتدائية في الكويت : نهج البحث والعمل لإصلاح المناهج الدراسية.

وصف مختصر للبحث:

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لفترة وجيزة أنوي :

1. تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية للصف الخامس الابتدائي في ثلاث مدارس ابتدائية للبنات في الكويت.
2. تنفيذ وتوثيق وحدة المناهج بالتعاون مع المعلمات التربية الفنية من أجل تقييم ذلك (التقييم التكويني).
3. تقييم المناهج الدراسية مرة أخرى (التقييم التراكمي) عن طريق اثنتين من المدرسات في محافظتين تعليميتين مختلفتين.

إذا كنت على استعداد لمساعدتي و التعاون معي من أجل تنفيذ وتقييم المنهج يرجى مراسلتي على البريد الإلكتروني حتى أستطيع أن ألتقي بك لمناقشة مشروع البحث.

تفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،

فاطمة محمد عبدالله

قسم : التربية

عنوان الجامعة : جامعة رو هامبتون

Roehampton University

Roehampton Lane,

London AW15 5PU

:alajmif@roehampton.ac.uk البريد الإلكتروني

هاتف الباحث : 0044-7733843422 (المملكة المتحدة)
99818805 (الكويت)

بيان موافقة :
أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث ، وأدرك أنني حر في الانسحاب في أي وقت. أنا أفهم أن المعلومات المقدمة سوف تعامل في الثقة من قبل الباحث والتي سوف تكون هويتي محمية في نشر أي نتائج.

الاسم :

التوقيع :

التاريخ :

يرجى الملاحظة : إذا كان لديك قلق حول أي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم أو أية استفسارات أخرى ، يرجى نشر هذه المسألة مع الباحث.

Appendix N



ETHICS BOARD

PARENTS PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent,

I am a PhD student from Kuwait studying Art Education at Roehampton University. As part of my research I would like to observe primary school teachers to investigate how they teach art history and use sketchbooks, I am also interested in the source materials they use in their art lessons.

Title of Research Project: Introducing Art History into Art Education in Kuwait

Primary Schools: An action research approach to curriculum reform.

Brief Description of Research Project:

This research will investigate how to develop the art curriculum in primary schools. The aim of my study is to improve and reform the curriculum for Year Five to include the teaching of art history and the use of sketchbooks.

Briefly I intend to:

1. Investigate art historical and cultural learning in the UK and the use of sketch books.
2. Research traditional weaving in Kuwait.
3. Develop a curriculum unit that contributes to Year Five students' knowledge and understanding of their unique cultural heritage and identity and uses sketch books to improve their drawing skills.
4. Test out this curriculum unit in some schools in Kuwait and evaluate it.

If you are willing to help me and let me observe your son/daughter in class please sign and send this paper to the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Fatema Alajmi

Investigator Contact Details:

Name: Fatema Alajmi

School: Education

University address: Roehampton University

Roehampton Lane, London AW15 5PU

Email: alajmif@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 07733843422

Consent Statement:

I agree to let my son/daughter take part in this research and I am aware that my son/daughter free to withdraw at any time. I understand that the information provided will be treated in confidence by the researcher and that my son's/daughter's identity will be protected in the publication of any findings.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Dean of School (or the Director of Studies.)

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المشاركات نموذج موافقة لأولياء أمور الطالبات

عزيزتي المعلمة:

أنا طالبة دكتوراة الفلسفة في التربية الفنية في جامعة روهامبتون في المملكة المتحدة. كجزء من بحثي أود تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية في المدارس الابتدائية للبنات في الكويت في ثلاث محافظات تعليمية مختلفة ، لمساعدتي في انتاج وحدة نقد المناهج الدراسية.

عنوان مشروع البحث:

تقديم تاريخ الفن في التربية الفنية للمدارس الابتدائية في الكويت : نهج البحث والعمل لإصلاح المناهج الدراسية.

وصف مختصر للبحث:

يجري البحث في التقدم المحرز كجزء من متطلبات درجة الدكتوراه في التربية الفنية في جامعة روهامبتون. منهجية البحث والعمل التجريبي سيعقد في المدارس الابتدائية في الكويت. وذلك لتطوير المناهج الفنية للصف الخامس الابتدائي في مدارس البنات بهدف مساعدة الطالبات اللاتي يستخدمن هذه المنهجية لفهم تراثهم الثقافي على نحو أفضل. وهذا البحث للتحقيق في كيفية تطوير المناهج الفنية في المدارس الابتدائية.

لفترة وجيزة أنوي :

1. تنفيذ وتقييم وحدة المناهج الدراسية للصف الخامس الإبتدائي في ثلاث مدارس ابتدائية للبنات في الكويت.
2. تنفيذ وتوثيق وحدة المناهج بالتعاون مع المعلمات التربية الفنية من أجل تقييم ذلك (التقييم التكويني).
3. تقييم المناهج الدراسية مرة أخرى (التقييم التراكمي) عن طريق اثنتين من المدرسات فيمحافظتين تعليميتينمختلفتين.

إذا كنت على استعداد لمساعدتي و التعاون معي من أجل تنفيذ وتقييم المنهج يرجى مراسلتي على البريد الإلكتروني حتى أستطيع أن ألتقي بك لمناقشة مشروع البحث.

تفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،

فاطمة محمد عبدالله

قسم : التربية

عنوان الجامعة : جامعة روهامبتون

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99818805 (الكويت)

بيان موافقة :

أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث ، وأدرك أنني حر في الانسحاب في أي وقت. أنا أفهم أن المعلومات المقدمة سوف تعامل في الثقة من قبل الباحث والتي سوف تكون هويتهم محمية في نشر أي نتائج.

الاسم :

التوقيع :

التاريخ :

يرجى الملاحظة : إذا كان لديك قلق حول أي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم أو أية استفسارات أخرى ، يرجى مناقشة هذه المسألة مع الباحث.